/31 cont'd/

595 be upheld; otherwise the balance would be upset, and a "wilderness of single men" would be inevitable.

When the head of a family dies, his property is equally divided

428 among his sons (if they live separately). If he does not have sons, his property is inherited by his relatives. Women do not have the right of inheritance, with the exception of the daughter whose hus-

597 band comes to live in her family. A son adopted as an heir also has the right to inherit.

551 2. Surname and Kin Group

Miao surnames probably go back to the period before the Miao came to Hainan Island. It is of value to find out whether there is any particular social relationship between those who bear the same surname.

There is a copy of a family register in every Miao family. I have seen the family register of the Lin family of Ang-chi village, the cover page of which reads as follows:

539 /32/
601

MAY LONGEVITY INSURE OUR DESTINY TEN THOUSAND YEARS
A BOOK OF THE FAMILY AND ITS BRANCHES COPIED BY LIN YING-LIEN TO BE KEPT AND MAINTAINED FOR A THOUSAND YEARS
MAY BLESSINGS AS HIGH AS THE SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS — BE TRANSMITTED

In this book the names and dates of birth and death of male and female members of each generation are all written down very clearly. A page is copied as follows:

" This is a certified copy of the register of the Family /tsung/ and its branches in its native region. They settled in Hung-li village, in Szu-en Prefecture inKwangsi-Fukien province. The three brothers Lin Ming-hsiu, Lin Ming-k'ai, and Lin Ming-yang built a house. They live on the east side of the house facing southwest, which is

/32 cont'd/

●539 auspicious. Ming-k'ai had four sons: Lin Te-chen, Lin Te-lung,
601 Lin Te-sheng, and Lin Te-ch'ao. /X-X had only one/* son Lin

/* This paragraph is obviously a repetition of the statement which was cited on p. 4, but the two Chinese texts cited by the author are slightly different. /

Lao-chang, who was born at noon time, on the twenty-first day of the seventh month of the year of Keng-sheng; Lin Lao-chang had a son, Lin Sheng-yüan, who was born in the hour of ch'en /7 to 9 A.M./ on the fifteenth day of the third month in the year of Keng-wu."

602 With this kind of family register, although a family has increased and scattered to different places, the relationship of the family members is maintained without interruption. Consequently, those of the same surname related by blood are forever connected and the awareness of the kin group is very deeply rooted. There were a number of Miao who were able to tell us in great detail about the localities from which they had migrated and distant localities in which they still had many cousins living. The Miao headman, Mr. Wang Fu-shou of Pao-ch'a village in Ta-ch'i, frequently called me lao-tsung /"venerable kinsman"/. /The author, Wang Hsing-jui, has the same surname. / This was an expression of a feeling of kin group relationship. Since the kin group consciousness still exists, it is very natural that the feelings of the people of the same surname thus extend even to those not closely related.

[221] Since their livelihood is chiefly dependent upon farming on the
61 mountain slopes, with great mobility of their population, the body of the kin group can never be permanently /33/ established. As time passes on and as the distance between their homes becomes gradually greater, the originally close blood relationship, therefore, also becomes more and more distant. On the other hand, the relationship between those of different surnames becomes closer

/34 cont'd/

622 whether there was also a property qualification. It is a fact, however, that the present chia-ch'ang, successors of the former shan-chia, all appear to be better off than the ordinary Miao people. Shan-chia is the keeper of knowledge for the Miao people. In his home he keeps the almanac, the Confucian classics, and other kinds of books. The public affairs of the village are under his direction and are all decided upon by him.

[527 787] According to an old Miao custom, on the eve of the New Year, the entire population of the village usually gathered in the shan-chia's home to present him with jars of wines and to offer congratulations. They sang and asked the shan-chia about things of the coming year. From his experience and greater learning, the shan-chia would answer them one by one. The song that they sang was called "The Old Villager," the words of which are as follows:

539 Creating the heaven, creating the earth—Emperor P'an has done;
He made the rites followed by later men.
In accord with the rites, dinner is served for two;
A bare table would trouble the venerable official.
The first cup, we offer to him to drink,
After the second and third cups, the sands turn to gold.*
Thousands of cups are for all the stars to drink,
So that the venerable tree /unc[illegible] sitting at the table may not be bored!
The golden/?/* cup is now respectfully put on the table,
Like a moon among the stars in the sky.
As two rows of stars now line the hall,
Also hope that the sun, standing above all the rest, will protect them.
In P'eng-cheng hall, all the stars are now sitting,
Without rest, without settling down, they await the difficulties of the coming spring.
Virtue spreads out to all the stars,
May the country be prosperous and the people be secure for ever!

/34 cont'd/

539 Is the year chia-tzu an intercalary year without an intercalary day?

/35/ We ask you, venerable sir, to tell us:
Where may we find the greatest benefit?
What is the most auspicious direction for the door to open toward?
Will we be fortunate again this year, or will no leaves grow?
Where is the best place for planting crops?
We beg you, venerable sir, to tell us:
Will all the stars be safe and happy for a million years?
On which side of the mountain shall we live safely?
Will the world be peaceful and the people have plenty of food?
This year has passed and the next year approaches.
We ask you what your plan is for scattering and settling down.
Once your plan is made known to the stars,
Prepare the horses and things for the journey.
We ask you, venerable sir, about the tree of the Official of the Spring,
And how much water and fish there will be for the coming year.
What amount of fish should be caught and animals be hunted?
How will be the spring rain and the sprouts of grain?
We beg you, venerable sir, to tell us.
This is why all the stars have come here.

/* This Miao folk song is very obscure even in the Chinese text. Many words were obviously miswritten by the original Miao copyist who miswrote the Chinese characters replacing them with those having the same sound. For instance, the character chin ("the present") in the sixth and ninth lines may be a miswriting of chin ("gold"); kan-tai a miswriting of kan-t'ai ("a dry or clean table") in the eighth

/35 cont'd/

539 and ninth lines; the word shu ("tree") a miswriting of shu ("uncle") in the eighth line; shu ("tree") a miswriting of shu ("common people") in the twenty-fifth line, etc. In order to make sense, I have tried to translate the song partly in accord with the sound instead of the meaning of the actual characters. —Tr. /

622 In this song they describe the shan-chia as the sun and themselves as the stars. As the stars are under the protection of the sun, so they are under the protection of the shan-chia (this is what line 12 means). They ask the shan-chia whether the next year will be an intercalary year (line 18). In which direction does prosperity lie? (line 20). Where is the best land to plant? (line 22). Will they have to move or not during the coming year? And if they have to move, please tell all to get the horses ready for the journey (lines 28 and 30). Fishing, hunting, and cultivation in the next year are all subjects included in their questions (lines 32 and 34). From this song we can see how important and complex the shan-chia's duties are.

/36/ (Figure of drum appears here.)

622 There is a large drum hanging in every shan-chia's home.
534 Whenever there are matters to discuss, the shan-chia will summon
202 a public meeting by beating the drum. During our field trip in a Miao village, one morning just before dawn we heard the beating of the drum and found that the shan-chia had summoned the villagers to discuss a chung-jen chai /public ceremony of worship/. The villagers indeed came in groups at the sound of the drum. Moreover, we observed with our own eyes that a shan-chia was entrusted with the responsibility of selecting a propitious day for a wedding.

476 Every village has its common land, common pasture, and
[12] common cemetery. Among the villagers a very close association

/37 cont'd/

427 amount. If the property is rented, the duration as well as the rate of rent /38/ is fixed. It is to be paid either in one payment or by yearly instalment. After the contract has expired, they are either to move away or to renew the contract, which is determined by mutual agreement. If the property is purchased, the price is usually 423 greater than if it were rented. After the contract is signed, the rights of the mountain are transferred to the Miao purchaser, who may make use of it as he will. The original seller no longer has any rights whatever. The reason why some people among the Miao are able to remain for relatively longer periods in one locality is that they have acquired the ownership of the mountains they live on. [675] Whether the mountain is rented or purchased, a contract is signed by both parties. The name of the mountain, the price or rent, and the duration if it is rented, are clearly stated. There are many mountains which have been purchased with joint funds of the villagers, [622] but on the contract only the name of the shan-chia or chia-ch'ang is written, because he is the representative of the whole village during the negotiations and the contract is also kept by him. In the home of a Miao chia-ch'ang, we saw many different contracts of this kind. Some of them are translated as follows:

675 "We, the signers of the contract for Ya-nan Mountain, T'ung
539 Li, Lao Ta-k'ai, Shih Chün and Ying Kuo-ying-chi, having ex-
423 amined the vegetation and marked the soil, hereby agree that the price of the mountain shall be 66 dollars. The expenses of tao-ping /the commission?/ shall be 350 cash and a peck of rice from each family. The mountain products, ching-pi, shan-ma, deer horn, bear gall, red and white rattan, are all the property of the owners of the mountain; they shall not be stolen or sold. The Miao will be allowed to cut wood on this mountain for the next 25 years. This contract shall not be revoked on any pretext. Since oral agreement is subject to dispute, this written contract has been drawn as evidence.

Witnessed by Ch'iu K'ai-i

/38 cont'd/

675 This contract is signed in public on the fifteenth day of the
539 second month of the twenty-sixth year of Kuang-hsü, the year of
423 Keng-tze /1900/."

"Again: On the preceding day, the Miao people signed an agreement to pay 270 silver dollars for the mountain land of Mao-kai Mountain. This contract is signed on the seventh day of the first month of the sixteenth year of the Republic /1927/."

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675 /39/ "The rent of Mt. Mao-jui shall be roughly one peck of
423 rice, 350 cash, one jar of wine, and one chicken, to be collected
427 every year."
436

"Wang Kung-ch'ing

427 A new contract has been signed in the year ting-mao of the
675 Republic /1927/; every family is to pay four dollars in the spring of every year. The expenses for tao-ping /commission?/ shall be 305 cash from each family; the expenses for shih-sheng /?/, 100 cash; one chicken, one peck of rice, and one jar of wine from each family.

Black beans, edible fungi, and other mountain products are all included."

The above are contracts for renting mountains.

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423 "Again: The lands of Mt. Mao-jui have been purchased from
675 the sellers Li Yüng-sheng, Li Yüng-sheng /sic/, and Mei Ch'ang-sheng. Mt. Mao-jui has been purchased in the twenty-second year of Kuang-hsü /1896/. The price agreed upon is 100 large silver dollars."

779 /55/
776

San Tsu	Tou-fu San Kuan	Wu-shang-hui
Hsi-tao wu-shang	Shih-erh Shang-ping /The twelve wounded soldiers/	P'in-pu-chi
Hao Kung-Chi /The good cock/	Shih-wu Shang Kung-chi /The fifteen injured cocks/	Shang-yüan-p'ou-hsiang
Chung-yüan Lo-p'a	Hsia-yüan Lo-p'a	Shih Kung-tsao /The four clerical officers/
Chao Shuai /General Chao/	Ma Shuai /General Ma/	Teng Shuai /General Teng/

776 As to which gods belong to the military group and which ones to the civilian group, I do not know. Each god seems to preside over a particular business. Their different duties are clearly divided. [532] Hence during the tso-chai ceremony, they only hung up ten or more pictures of gods who are in charge of the business of this particular ceremony. Because the pictorial representation and the duties of each god differ, the texts for each also are different. To save space in this book, I have merely copied the text of the Chiu-niang /the ninth lady/ section which is as follows:

779 ●539 You, drummer, beat the drum of yang-shou;
Beat again the drum of chao-yang.
Hearing the tunes of the drum turned to yang,
Chiu-niang, highly praised, dismounted from her horse.
This morning you were in the temple of Fa-t'an.
The kung-tsao officer was ordered to bring you the invitation.
After you received the invitation from the kung-tsao,
The precious horses were prepared for you to go to the place of ceremony.
You dismounted in front of the altar,
And were welcomed to the ceremony, enjoying the burning incense.

/55 cont'd/

779
539

While the worship-settling wine was served at eight tables,
The boys were singing the song of yüan-chang below the tables.
/56/ Has the personal story of Chiu-niang not been told?
Every spring has its source, and every flower has its root.
The wind was blowing from peak to peak;
The current of the water flooded over falls and falls.
Bought up by her parents, she was a clever child.
Niang was very calm and pretty,
Her eyes were as bright as the Seven Stars, and her eyebrows, were like the crescent moon.
Her face was as smooth as the paper made in the Easter Capital;
Her head and feet were equally beautiful.
The flowers she wore were as fresh as the morning stars in the eastern sky.
There was a san-shan cap on her head;
It was decorated with gold dust.
Her blouse was embroidered with pearls;
Her eight-piece silk slip was long enough to touch the floor.
Her elder brother's name was T'ang T'ai-pao;
He was a very handsome young man.
To her parents were born a boy and a girl before Niang.
She, T'ang Chiu-niang, was her parents' youngest child.
One morning she entered the garden;
Inspired by the lushness of the flowers, she pondered for a while.
Going through the Upper Village, there was not a handsome one;
Passing the Lower Village, there was not one gallant.
There was a cousin named Yang-erh who lived in the Middle Village;
He had a handsome bearing and a gallant personality.
Awakening at dawn the next morning,
She was waiting for him on the roadside where people passed carrying water.
There she met Cousin Yang-erh.
"Cousin Erh, please, listen to me.

/56 cont'd/

779
539

I have been waiting especially for you this morning;
I should like you to be my companion tonight."
/57/ "Listen to me," Yang-erh replied.
"If you are willing to think of me.
You are an excellent gown maker;
Make a pair of long gowns for me,
And a pair of short ones,
And a pair of under garments,
On which are embroidered a drake and duck with fine silk.
Were all my clothes made by you, Niang,
I would look fine and handsome."
Chiu-niang then said to Cousin Yang-erh:
"Listen to me, Cousin Erh,
Whatever food and wine you like, I have all ready in the kitchen.
I'll prepare the wine whenever you like.
The wine is the Ninth Month Wine,
That I will drink with you for remembrance."
Yang-erh then turned to Chiu-niang and said:
"Chiu-niang, please, listen to me:
I won't drink the wine served in a gold cup,
I would like to taste it through your lips."
The East Hall was opened, set with tables and chairs.
Dragons, phoenixes, and drakes and ducks were displayed,
And Yang-erh was received in her home.
He was entertained with different dishes and wines:
Three kinds of food and five kinds of flavors were put on the table;
Boiled pork and choice fish were in the center.
Fruits were offered to him while they were drinking the first cup.
She took away his long robe while the second cup was served.
She became tipsy after the third cup was emptied.
Her face was as pink as a row of /red/ flowers;

/58/

779
539

He also became dizzy after the third cup
And went into the inner room to look for Chiu-niang.
The tables and dishes were taken away and the chairs were rearranged.
They went to the bedroom hand in hand.
After sitting a while in the inner room,
They both began undressing.
The long gown was hung up on the gold hook.
The short gown was hung on the beams of her bed.
The head kerchief was put on the bamboo clothes holder;
The shoes were put in her shoe box.
With both hands, he slid open her silk mosquito net,
And asked her where the double pillow was.
Chiu-niang then said to Cousin Yang-erh:
"Cousin Erh, why do you speak so thoughtlessly;
Before this, I have been a maid living in the inner room,
I don't know why I should have a double pillow."
During the first tien of the first keng they slept together,
Like a pair of bamboo . .
During the second tien of the second keng he was sleeping by her feet,
Which looked like a pair of ivory combs.
They were sleeping so deeply during the third keng,
Just like two dead persons on the high bed.
The cocks began to crow during the fourth keng;
At the fifth keng, it seemed there were hundreds of flowers waving around them.
Chiu-niang then said to Cousin Yang-erh:
"Cousin, please, listen to me.
I have a golden cock which has not yet crowed.
My silver cock will report to me at dawn."
They kept sleeping on the same pillow, just like
A pair of blooming flowers.
/59/When Chiu-niang awoke it was dawn,
She asked Yang-erh to get dressed.

/59 cont'd/

779
539

She led him from the East Hall to the West Hall.
From the West Hall they reached the North Hall, which was too long,
Where they met her sister-in-law who said:
"You, sister-in-law, have had a man at home!"
Her brother also saw them.
Soon the neighbors gathered.
They arrested Yang-erh and put him in irons.
They fastened his legs with hemp ropes and iron locks.
They beat Yang-erh out of his skin.
The beating was so painful that
Yang-erh began to cry out and shout to Chiu-niang,
Who then came to her brother.
"Brother," she said, "please listen to me.
I saw you beating Yang-erh as if you were beating me.
You will violate the law if you beat Yang-erh to death.
Chiu-niang then began to think of a scheme;
Later she did hit upon one.
With her left hand, she took off her dragon-and-phoenix hair pin.
With her right hand, she set the granary afire.
Her brother turned away to fight the fire;
Niang then set her lover free to go home.
He was freed with a voiceless cry.
He was freed like a released lamb.
After Yang-erh had gone about three or five li,
Chiu-niang then called him back and said to him:
"You should prepare agates, pearls, and four pecks of silver.
Each peck containing eighty thousand pairs of cash.
/60/ You should save numerous strings of cash, and
I will go into exile with you never to return.
You should take up the silk clothes /business/.
You must not gamble to make me worry.
You must not amuse yourself in the brothels,
That will make you spiritually sick.

/60 cont'd/

779
539

There will be plenty of wine in the shop when you want to drink,
Soup and grain when you are hungry.
If you want to eat meat, please eat the finely cut parts;
Don't eat the bones which might choke you to death.
If you want to build a house, build a high one.
Don't build a low one for that would make other people jeer at you.
To desire fine ladies is the habit of all men in the world,
But who else has a deeper heart than mine?"
They said good-by at the crossroad;
Chiu-niang returned to her room.
She was thinking of hanging herself;
Yet she had not taken leave of her parents.
First, she prayed: "My brother and his wife
Should take good care of our parents.
They must not serve cold rice to our father to eat;
They must not serve cold wine to our father to drink."
Second, she said farewell to the bamboo clothes holder:
"You will never again see your lady hanging up her clothes."
Third, she said good-by to the red silk mosquito net:
"You will never again see younger sister return to her room."
Fourth, she bade farewell to her scissors and measures:
"You will never see younger sister measuring and cutting cloth."
Fifth, she bade farewell to the seven red boxes:
"There will be no more clothes for you to carry."
/61/ Sixth, she prayed in farewell to the six relatives of the nine lanes:
"Yoy will never again see younger sister walking about the countryside.
You will never see her washing her face in the morning;
You will never see her come home at night."
Seventh, she bade farewell to the rivers and piers:
"You will never see her washing clothes."
Eight, she prayed in farewell to the family altar and incense:
"You will never see younger sister burn the incense sticks."

/61 cont'd/

779
539

Ninth, she prayed in farewell to her dear parents:
"Your daughter has committed suicide and entered the world of drunkards."
Finally, she prayed in farewell to gallant Cousin Yang-erh:
"We two will be separated forever!"
She hung herself during the first keng:
She was dead at the second.
In the third keng, her spirit appeared in a dream of her parents.
Her father was wakened by a nightmare.
Holding a lamp, he went to the room of younger sister.
At the first glance in her room, he saw her,
She was hanging from the high beam.
Lady T'ang began to cry.
Over and over, she called, "Chiu-niang."
Then she said, "Every girl in the world loves gallant young men;
Why shouldn't I think about /Chiu-niang/."
Then she began to call: "T'ang Tai-pao, my son.
Hurry up, take the long ladder and bring her down."
Her body was washed with incense perfume;
Dressed up in red silk clothes.
A coffin made of camphor wood was bought.
Chiu-niang's body was put into it.
The East Hall was cleaned up for her coffin.
The South Hall was used for the memorial service.
/62/ A geomancer was invited to look for a good grave site.
The wide road leading southward was a good place for spreading a reputation.
Her coffin was carried across the royal river of nine turns.
Her coffin was carried cross the royal river of nine turns.
She was buried at the entrance of the wide road to the south.
The tomb of the victim of love was seen by everybody who passed by.
The tomb was protected by a green dragon on the left;
And by a white tiger on the right.

/62 cont'd/

779 Hundreds of birds bowed in front of it.
539 The goddess of jade protected her from behind.
When a Taoist priest passed by, he would repeat the name of Buddha;
When a Buddhist priest passed by, he would burn some incense.
When an old man of sixty passed by, he would say mournfully:
"What a pity that one so bright died young!"
When an old woman of sixty passed by, she might say sadly:
"What a pity one so bright did not live long!"
When a young fellow of eighteen passed by, he would murmur:
"Why am I not so lucky as to court a clever girl like her?"
When a young girl of eighteen passed by, she might say with grief,
"Why did such a clever girl have to be buried so young?"
Men and women are kindly advised hereby,
If you have children, think early of their futures.
Should your neighbor to the east have a son, his marriage must not wait long!
Should your neighbor to the west have a daughter, must she not be married while young?
One must not follow the example of Sister Chiu of the T'ang family,
Without a husband, she died like a blossoming /rose/.
Chiu-niang is now here in person to bless those in front of the altar.
You, Chiu-niang, give your blessing to whoever is leading the horse.

779 195 The Taoist books of the Miao are mostly written in this poetic style with seven words in each line. They have nothing to do with the preaching of Taoism. This aspect is /63/ worthy of study.
793 795 Both the civilian and military Taoist priests use wooden seals inscribed with different symbols. The civilian Taoist priests have two rectangular seals of the same size, (See illustration). The military Taoist priests also have two wooden seals, one of which is inscribed with symbols similar to those of the civilian Taoist priests.

/72 cont'd/

539
241

Bringing in the Crops Song

Bringing our grain crops home,
Shen Nung and T'u-ti* are with us as we bring our crops home,

* Shen Nung was a legendary emperor
who is the supposed teacher of husbandry.
T'u-ti is a term for a local divinity.

Escorting us all the way home to their shelter.
Safely placed in the granaries, these crops will draw the envy of the emperor.
Thank you,
Shen Nung and T'u-ti,
For escorting and protecting the crops all the way home.
When the emperor bestows his attention on us, we'll think of you.
From the palace in the capital, a messenger will be sent us,
And much glittering gold will accompany him.
The tenure of a hsiu /title of government office/ is only three years,
But riches and honor come to an official.
For all this we will be much indebted to you,
And your kindness will be borne in the mind of the emperor forever.

533
539 (2) Songs connected with social activities, such as the one cited in Chapter IV; "The Song of the Old Villager."

533
539 (3) Songs related to love between the sexes. For example, when an unmarried man and woman happen to run into each other in the street, the following is frequently sung:
831

First admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
Show how you feel according to your heart's desire.
What you desire is seen by others,

/72 cont'd/

533
●539
831

Just as plainly as the sun on the east and the sky on the west.
/73/ Second admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
If one drinks as much as one wants at a feast,
People will say that like rowing a boat while ignoring the water—
Drinking as much as one wants is a waste.
Third admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
If you are willing, for 10,000 autumns,
We'll join hands together;
On the bridge over the tangling rivers, we'll walk side by side.
Fourth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
If you find someone to join you at romantic eighteen;
You can live happily up to sixty.
Unhappy and middle-aged, that is a waste.
Sixth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
When your brother comes here to stay for a while.
If he is against me, I will not please him even if I slaughter a dragon to treat him.
If he is agreeable, he will be pleased with a glass of cold water.
Seventh admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
If you hide a man in your room, that is a waste.
Moreover, I fear your man will be killed.
His life will be lost on T'ai-shan mountain and will never return.
Eighth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
You should not loan your money too freely, if you are rich.
You should be satisfied and not press, even if you cannot get back your principal.
Otherwise, you will feel regretful if someone kills himself.
Ninth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
When you are in possession of a cow and a piece of land,
You should not hesitate to consider the coming of spring.
When you have no cow you cannot get an early start, even if spring is here;

/73 cont'd/

533 And a home without a cow is lost.
● 539 Tenth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
831 You should not stay idle when you see others learn to write,
/74/ Someday should you get involved in a lawsuit,
You'll know the difficulty of getting someone to write for you on a blank sheet of paper.
Eleventh admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
[161] Don't curse and utter foul words to your parents.
You are indebted to your parents for raising you.
Otherwise, your life will be lost on T'ai-shan mountain and will never return.
Twelfth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
When the immortals come to fetch you to the king of the wheel,
You will be referred to the renowned king to receive judgment;
He may decided that you are to be reborn in your youth.

The following songs are frequently sung during such occasions as when a man and woman meet in a rendezvous, or when they bid each other farewell, feeling lost and sorrowful on seeing the loved one depart.

539 I. Seeing off my flower,
831 As the dark clouds see off the moon across the heart of the sky—
The dark clouds are escorting the moon, and in a little while will escort you,
Back to your melancholy land and melancholy home.
Farewell!

II. First farewell to my precious flower who will soon be returning home,
Like the clouds I see leaving the sky.
Looking at the clouds leaving the sky, how sad my humble heart is!
I am hiding my sadness at parting from my love.
Second farewell to my precious flower, from the dragon's noble land,

/74 cont'd/

539
631

Who is leaving this noble land to return home.
In tears I am seeing my flower off;
My tears are hidden in my heart.
Third farewell to my young, romantic sweetheart,
Leaving this noble land, unmindful of herself.
Fourth farewell to my young, noble sweetheart.
Seeing my flower glib and clever, I cannot bear to let her go.
/75/ If you feel sick at heart.../obscure/
Why not come back when halfway, and you'll not have to worry any more!
Fifth farewell to my angel from heavenly T'ao-yüan /an Arcadia/.
With sad thoughts, my tears are falling on my breast.
For you, angel flower, I remained alive.
For you, my flower, I'll end my life.
Sixth farewell to my romantic one— with great pain in my heart.
My grief is piercing my heart like a sharp knife.
There is much danger on the road;
Take care of yourself, while you are far away.
Seventh farewell to my precious dragon flower—with great pain in my heart.
It is like fire burning in my breast.
If fire burned my breast, I would not wish to die.
But if I did not need you /?/, my dragon pearl, I would wish to die.
Eighth farewell to my precious flower, take care on the road.
Pairs of teardrops flow down my breast.
I feel pain in my heart that you are risking your life.
Come back when halfway, and you'll not need to worry anymore.
Ninth farewell to drake and duck*, wealth and fortune are split and scattered.

/75 cont'd/

/* Symbol of conjugal fidelity and happiness. —Ed./

● 539
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Every step forward on the road step by step separates us.
Dark leaves are falling off the flowers, birds are leaving the trees.
Thinking sadly of my flower, I cannot bear to let her go.
Tenth farewell, the clouds and rain and the singing are drifting away.
Together we happily dallied here in this place;
Now I am returning to my gloomy house, with tears in my eyes.
Sorrow and depression will be found in the flowers and trees.
Farewell!
I think of our meeting again in the future.
I am staying here in my own native place.
I will wait for you for the next two or three years.
Farewell!
/76/ One day apart means ten thousand days' thinking of you.
After three years' waiting, heaven cannot bid over our wills:
The tie which our former lives predestined will bind us to no more.

III. Riding through Wu-chou Fu on horseback,
Turning my head, I met the fairest one.
Together we were so happy after I met my fairest one with goose-shaped brows.
At night I looked at the five planetary gods /i.e., the stars/, and bowed,
That wealth might befall heaven's gate before the trip,
And gently drop thirteen points better than my own wish.
Water flowed down our faces as we parted /?/,
Separating from my flower, we shall not meet again in this age.
Best wishes to you, my flower, the Goddess of Mercy,

/76 cont'd/

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831

Like the clouds drifting and turning away from the hills.
Clouds leaving the hills, my thoughts are endless.
Thinking of you, I feel empty and lost that we shall meet no more.
Farewell, my precious one,
Like Hsien-pei seeing off Ying-t'ai,
Ying-t'ai returned to the Jen-ch'a mountains.
But Hsien-pei grieved to death for his flower.
Farewell, my precious one,
Like Tou-nü /"bean girl"/ bidding farewell to Mi-shen /god of rice/,
Mi-shen was bewitched by Tou-nü;
But Tou-nü changed her heart and married another.
Farewell, my precious one,
Like Shih-nü /"tenth girl"/ bidding farewell to T'ang-hsien,
T'ang-hsien went to the capital and was appointed to the office of hsiao-kuan.
And on the way back he met Tuan-yang-ch'un.
Farewell, my precious one,
Like San-nü /"third girl"/ bidding farewell to Han-p'ing.
/77/ Han-p'ing died for San-nü,
As Tsung-huang lost his head because of covetousness.
Farewell, my precious one,
Like Shao-nü /"young girl"/ taking leave of Wen-lung,
I hope that you will remain as fair as Shao-nü.
Like Tung-yung taking leave of Yang-ch'un,
Who sold his body to bury his parents.
I wish I could sell my body at my precious one's native place.
Farewell, my fairest, the autumn lotus.
We shall pursue different roads on our way;
" " " " " " " ".
The moon splits into two parts to return to her path.
Farewell!
With the brush in my hand I'll paint you;

/77 cont'd/

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831

The picture will be so exactly like you, your face and your brows.
Thinking of you, I'll look at it from time to time.
Farewell!
I'll write about my deep feelings on the Pa-hsien desk;
Writing often will somehow quiet my feelings.
I will not write my verses in double lines.
Clouds and rain bid my autumn lotus away;
Like drawing the knife to cut through the binding vines.
Cutting the vines into two will not cut my fairest from me—
The autumn lotus will resist the cutting without anyone knowing it.
Farewell!
They say my flower hastens past the mountain,
/The next two lines are too obscure to be translated.—Ed./
Farewell, my flower!
Seeing my flower off past Shih-huang,
/78/ Seeing my flower off just past Shih-huang,
Shih-huang draws his hands and does not turn his head.

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(4) Songs sung and answered by the hosts and the guests, taking reciprocal turns, at wedding feasts, are showin in the following several sections:

I. Many thanks to the p'ing-tung /go-between/ who matched this couple.
They have come here today and have met in front of this table.
Carried by ts'ai-huo from Tien-men, village,
They arrived at the bridge; their arrival was announced by the eight carriers.
They passed over the bridge without turning.
Their horoscopes were destined by Heaven.
The alliance was checked in the Wen-ch'ü-an, /?/
They did know that it was stated that they too should meet.
They were not then drake and duck /yüan-yang/ at the House of Yüan-yang.

/78 cont'd/

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But they are now judged to be yüan-yang on this earth.
Now they are going back to the House of Yüan-yang,
To sit and decide whereto they should fly together.
/Two lines omitted here because of obscurity of meaning./
The Dipper and its seven stars together give them judgment;
The Southern Dipper and its six stars will fly with them,
To go and visit the chuang-yüan /In China the leading graduate of the Hanlin Academy/—and with much eloquence on their lips.
The book with tzu-wei /name of a constellation?/ will record all this.

/Song II omitted because of obscurity in meaning.—Tr./

/79/III. Tonight we have the mighty dragons as our guests.
We have no golden tables and polished chairs for them to sit on.
Chairs made of white wood will have to do for the officials to sit on.
They will have to sit here before bare tables.
See the officials have arrived!
See the officials come in through the door!
See the officials, so witty, sit at the tables!
We have no golden tables nor polished chairs for them.
Good water from the well!
The water from the well flows clear and clean in all directions:
One flows down the green-silk hall,
And the other flows down the tower of the Noble Gate.
Not good to hear!
It is not good to offend the dragons face to face.
We are poor people and we have nothing to offer;
We have to serve cold water as tea for the mighty dragons.
We are a humble family;
We are poor and miserable and have nothing good to eat.
As for a drink, we have neither tea nor wine.
Don't let us offend the honored ones.

/79 cont'd/

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If the wine is not good,
If is like offering well water to officials.
Cold water is offered to the noble officials to drink.
One cup will make the officials feel good.
This is a humble family without golden wine cups.
White stones placed in a line on the table will be the cups;
White stones as cups are not right—
They will not look in line, no matter how you put them on the table.
/80/ We have no golden wine cups; we have only earthenware.
Nor have we golden tables or polished chairs for you.
The officials have red sedans with polished chairs.
We are poor and miserable and cannot afford all this.
We offer drinks to the noble officials with our hands.
After one cup, they will feel good.
We know you honorable ones are disgusted with the taste of our wine;
We know you are disgusted with our rough hands.
You are grumbling because we cannot afford to offer big baked cakes.
Grape myrtle /?/ and green vegetables are placed on the table.
" " " " " " " " " "
Plain vegetables on the table are tasteless—even with salt.
We are miserable!
We think of whatever we can do—our humble hearts are good. /?/
The kindness of the dragon's heart is shown more than when he is in his palace;
It is our rare honor to have them come to our feast.
Not good to hear!
It is not good to offend the tigers face to face.
On these big, bare tables we can offer nothing.
It is like the eastern sea cutting off the sandy net. /?/
We cannot give the honored ones everything.
Ashamed that our lowly family has not yet established a house—

/80 cont'd/

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Without tables, without chairs, we are not yet established,
Without bowls and without plates, there is nothing we can put on the tables in lines or rows.
Rice is served!
We offer rice to the honorable officials with our humble hands.
/81/ The honorable ones who have come here have no chairs to sit on,
Like swallows sitting on a crossbeam,
And falling on the ground, the noble ones get hurt.
Their clothes are torn, making them feel bad.
Our family is poor and has no golden chopsticks.
Green bamboo and polished chopsticks we offer to the officials to hold.
Red sedans and golden chopsticks are in Kwangtung—
They are too rare to fall into our hands.
The honorable and witty officials have come from a long distance,
And sit here now as if before bare tables.
Before bare tables, with no wine to drink,
Your hearts are becoming unfriendly.
In the hall five tables /...obscure/ are used up,
Like six pairs of drakes and ducks joined together.
In the hall a group of stars are now sitting at the tables,
...to wish fortune to the family.
When one goes into the woods to cut some bamboo, one stirs the trees.
When one goes down to the water to draw out the fish nets, one arouses the dragon.
First, may our landlords' houses have riches and honor,
May strings of cash be piled up in rows at the head of the bed.
May all our landlords enjoy long life,
A long life like that of P'eng Tsu*.

/* The Methuselah of China./

/81 cont'd/

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Second, may our masters seek to become immortals.
Once one cultivates Buddhist immortality, it will lead to becoming chuang-yüan /highest graduate of the Hanlin Academy/.
A chuang-yüan's virtue is seen seeking the way to immortality.
And each man will be seen as naturally intelligent.
Third, may our masters' houses be favored with riches and honor,
May their stalls be full of livestock: pigs, sheep, cattle, and horses;
And when they are released from the stalls,
May no eagles, birds, or big snakes dare to touch them. /82/
Fourth, may our masters have long lives,
Long lives like P'eng Tsu's.
P'eng Tsu, many years; our masters, many years!
P'eng Tsu, many springs; our masters, many springs!
Fifth, when our masters sow their seeds,
May the crops grow and multiply five-fold.
Flourishing so that every year nine granaries of grain will be harvested.
Sixth, as our masters pass on the mountain roads,
And arrive at the yellow mountain,
May the mountain horses and yellow deer reach it,
Climbing with all four feet without faltering.
Seventh, when our masters go fishing,
May big fish come from all directions,
And drop dead into your nets;
So that you may go home with a big catch in your hands.
Eighth, may our masters enjoy long life—
Lives as long as green silk stretching over a hundred thousand feet long;
May you talk with eloquence to the judge in the other world,
So that no sickness nor evil spirits will dare to befall your families.

/82 cont'd/

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Ninth, may our masters' work in burning be successful,
So that each /?/ year light will appear at the shrines,
And fields will be bright without ploughing,
And your sons will grow up naturally wise and bright without a teacher.
Tenth, may all the honorable stars now sitting before us
This year become wise officials.
And the fact become known throughout the world,
And your parents elegantly ride in goose-shaped sedans
May the high families before us be endlessly blessed,
So that we small stars facing them will not know how to act, /83/
And bamboos and firecrackers break forth the good tidings to old and young.
/This next line is obscure./
Eleventh, may our masters seek the road to wealth,
So that when you just step out the door, you will meet riches.
When one meets great fortune at the door,
It is a sign that one will become an official.
Twelfth, may you rise to a new office as a distinguished official of the highest degree,
With five boys and five girls lined up before you,
With your pigs producing dragons and your hens producing phoenixes,
With people, tens of thousands of them, under your office.
Three steps forward, three steps backward;
Three steps backward, the wedding will be over.
Two young branches with pure thoughts
Pray that you go up to the ... tables
That all the stars will be seated
And hasten to eat and drink tea.
With hands on our breasts we thank the distinguished ones.
All the stars are now leaving to have a walk outside,
Strolling in a line, two in a row.
We have great feeling for you at the moment you pass by here.

/83 cont'd/

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IV. All the various officials have been wandering about looking for the moon.
We have found the moon.
We have had the luck to receive their honorable favor.
When first we were summoned,
It was somewhat like the eastern capital summoning us to the moon.
This is a wedding matched by the six points.
Coming into this flower place, we look around,
And hope the son of heaven /the hosts/ will guide our steps.
We come into the autumn (...) bamboo tree mountain,
We come into the Tower of the Noble Gate,
/84/ The Tower of the Noble Gate is so well furnished.
Polished chairs line up on the four sides.
Our hosts offers us the best white rice—
Placed on the table, its fragrance spreads over the whole feast.
Even before eating it, one feels good in the heart.
Our honorable host's family has riches and honor.
Gold bowls and silver cups confront us.
This is like the occasion in the palace of the Jade Emperor at Peking—
Dragons and phoenixes in lines and rows shining all over the sky.
Our hosts offer us the best golden chopsticks—
Their ends and tips are coated with gold,
Glittering and brightening all the corners of the hall.
Our hosts' house has riches and honor.
The bright table in front shines up toward the sky.
This is like the city river at I-fu,
With dragons and phoenixes in rows and lines reddening the four sides with brightness.
Our hosts have everything, thousands and tens of thousands.
Gold wine cups are placed in lines on the feast tables,
This is like the dazzling stars appearing in the sky.

/84 cont'd/

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Wine placed in them gives off a bouquet reaching the sky.
Our hosts have the best of wine and rice;
Placed on the feast tables, its fragrance reaches everywhere—
Its fragrance reaches a distance of four li,
It can be compared to the dragon's liver....
For two years they prepared for the southern stars.
Our hosts, honorable and rich, sit by the line of tables,
Offering us rice and drink out of golden bowls.
All the stars feel good after drinking so much. /85/
/Two lines omitted here because of omissions in the text./
Golden vases are placed at the line of tables,
In rows and pairs to match the heavenly stars.
Our host has many riches and much honor
The bouquet of the jade wine and the gold cups spreads over the whole feast
Having drunk it this year is an immense pleasure.
The bouquet will grace our mouths for sixty years.
To travel by horseback to the drake and duck
Is like receiving the courtesy and hospitality of a Literary Chancellor.
We very much hope that the honorable ones will guide us in our manners,
And lead us around the four corners with open hands.
The Southern Dipper and the Six Ranks all appear here.
All have come to pay a visit at the Hall of the Son of Heaven.
Officials have come on foot to visit the learned ones;
We have come from a distance for the wedding.
Letting loose the horses and holding a pearl, we enter the hall.
When the new officials are published before the emperor,
On the list will be clearly listed all of you,
To be entered and commented on forever.
We very much hope all the stars /hosts/ will guide us in our manners,

/85 cont'd/

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Like the bright moon guiding the stars in roaming around.
Endless words and phrases cannot be exhausted to express our feelings,
For getting the stars back in the mazy river /of heaven/.
If so many high and wise ones will condescend to hear us:
We draw our hands to give our wishes for the coming winter and the four seasons.
We all give our wishes for the coming winter and the four seasons.
May sickness and evil spirits dare not come to your house,
/86/ And every season of each year may safely befall you,
And may you have lives as long as green silk stretching over ten thousand feet long.
May riches and honor come to our landlords,
And strings of cash be piled up in rows at the head of the bed,
Precious things in gold caskets at the head of the bed.
And may silken cloth and satin embroideries fill the whole hall.
Moreover, riches and honor to our landlords,
Riches and honor greater than Shih Tsung's,
And may our landlords have everything that can be had,
And for ten thousand years may they be known as wise.
Moreover, may our masters seek to become immortals.
In the other world the chuang yüan /the highest graduate/ will be at peace in the former heaven /Taoist term for previous existence/.
The T'ien Shih /"heavenly teacher," a term for the head of the Taoist sect/ will mark this on his golden list.
Divine powers will carry the spirit to the Jade Palace.
Riches and honor to our masters' house.
May herds of cows and horses multiply in all the stalls.
When they are released from the stalls to go outdoors,
May no eagles, birds, and great snakes dare to touch them.
Long life to our masters—
A long life like that of P'eng Tsu, who lived so long.

/86 cont'd/

539 When our masters plant grain,
585 May the crops multiply five-fold,
Rich grains growing to the tips,
Yielding crops enough for ten full granaries every year.
May our masters seek the road to wealth,
That when you reach the mountain, fish and meat will come.
May the mountain horses and jade deer on which you come
Climb with all four feet without faltering.
/87/ When our masters go fishing,
May big fish come from all directions,
And drop dead into your nets.
So that you may go home with a big catch in your hands.
May our masters' path go in ten directions:
May incense burn at the shrines every year.
May horses come from four directions for you to sit and ride.
May your sons grow up naturally wise and bright without a teacher.
May our masters seek the road to wealth,
So that when you just step out the door, you will meet riches.
When one meets great fortune at the door,
It is a sign that one will become an official.
May all the honorable stars now sitting before us
This year become wise officials,
And the fact become known throughout the world,
And your parents elegantly ride in goose-shaped sedans.
This year we judge this couple here to take their seats at the wedding ceremony.
Next year there will be another pair at the wedding feast.
Two judgments and two weddings match two couples.
Two couples will multiply so that two will become two by two.

533 The third and fourth songs of the above are sung by hosts and
585 guests, each taking the role of singing and answering. The hosts sing the song first (No. III above), and the guests answered with

/87 cont'd/
533 another song (No. IV above). It can be seen that the hosts' part
585 mainly contains words expressing courtesy and humbleness. The
[571] guests' part expresses praise, responding properly to the feelings of the former.

574 V. During ordinary social occasions, for example, when a guest
533 comes from a distant place to stay in the village, at night the villagers sing the following song to the guest:

● 539 A famous goose waits to judge Heaven and the Sun.
A dry space /?/ withers in a pool of water.
/88/ A distinguished chief of the Hall of Filial Piety has come to this village!
The capital has sent ten thousand government servants to assist.
The heavenly lord with his generals rises suddenly to judge Heaven and the Sun.
All the officials and stars have prepared to welcome you.
/One line omitted here because of obscurity of meaning./
The lamps have been lighted early in the village.
People have come down from Peking and the Emperor.
From all four sides, old and young have come here.
All the streets and houses have been ready for days.
Descending into the world is hard to do.
The weather is cold and wall tops are shattered by thunder,
Causing leaves to blow about in confusion.
We wish the middle of spring would arrive,
So that the bamboo trees would put out new leaves.

765 Another song is one sung at the end of the tso chai ceremony.
533 When the Taoist priests are about to leave, the host's wife sees them off by singing it.*

/* This song is not included here because omission of too many words in the original renders translation impossible.—Tr./

/88 cont'd/

533 We have copied a great many of the Miao songs above. These songs, because they have been made rigid through writing, have lost their original freshness and spontaneity. Moreover, the errors the Miao made in /89/ writing them out have rendered the songs sometimes almost unreadable. It is a great pity that the real charm and wit displayed in Miao songs cannot be appreciated from the pages here!

(3)

538 The moods conveyed to us by Miao songs, when they were sung,
152 were not those of loftiness and tragedy, but rather those of tenderness and delicate pathos. There are many breaks in the singing, but the tune during these breaks merely lengthens and weakens, the lingering sounds of the music not breaking off. Thus, it takes a
533 fairly long time to finish the singing of each song. Those songs which are sung as counterparts are started first by one in a group of persons. He stops at the end of the fourth line, and the opposite party will continue the singing with an answering part for another four lines. Then the first singer will pick up the singing again. In this manner, the singing is kept on with every four lines sung alternately by the two opposing parties. The form of Miao songs, as can be seen from the examples given above, is of two kinds: One kind has seven characters to a line. Most of the Miao songs are of this kind. The other kind has three-character lines alternating regularly with seven-character lines. Because of the difference in form, these two groups of songs are sung in different ways, which will be illustrated here. For example, in the singing of a song of
533 the first kind, take the following words:

534 "Jen hua tu ch'uan pu k'an shui, yin chiu t'an to yeh shih hsien."

/People will say that like rowing a boat while ignoring the water, drinking as much as one wants is a waste./ (Excerpt from a Miao song). They are sung in the following manner:

(The dash between the words indicates the lengthened, carried-over tones from the preceding words).

/89 cont'd/

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539

Jen hua /people say/ O hoy — ǔ Vǐt — tu ch'uan /rowing a boat/ — pu k'an /ignoring/ — clo shui /water/ — ā hā — hum — yin chiu /drinking/ — clā t'an /as one wants/ — to /much/ — yeh shih /is/ — hsien /waste/ — O hoy — ǔ Vǐt — hum — tu ch'uan — pu k'an — clā shui — tī hā — hum — yin chiu — t'an to O hoy — ǔ Vǐt — shih — hsien — yeh /particle of emphasis/ — shih — hsien — hā

/90/ Every two lines make up one unit in the song. Each unit is always sung as above, but a short pause is given between units.

Songs of the second kind are sung in the following two ways:

(a) Take the following words:

"Fen li le, yi szu tsai hou te hsiang feng." /Farewell, I am thinking that we shall meet again in the future./ They are sung in the following manner:

Fen li le /farewell/ — a hā — hum — yi szu /thinking/ — tsai /in the/ — hou /future/ — te /get to/ — hsiang /each other/ — feng /meet/ — hoy — ǔ Vǐt — hum — fen li clo — le tī hā — hum — yi szu — tsai hou O hoy — ǔ Vǐt — hsiang — feng — te — hsiang — feng — hā —

(b) Take the following words:

"Sung hua ch'ü, wu yün sung yüeh kuo t'ien hsin."
/Seeing off my flower, (as) the dark clouds see off the moon across the heart of the sky./

They are sung in the following manner:

Sung /see off/ — hua /flower/ clo — ch'ü /go/ ā hā — hum — wu /dark/ yün /clouds/ — sung /see off/ lo — yüeh (moon) — kuo /across/ — t'ien /sky/ — hsin /heart/ — hoy — sung hua clo — ch'ü tī O hā — hum — wu yün sung yüeh O hoy — ǔ Vǐt — t'ien hsin — kuo — t'ien hsin — hā —

/91/

533 Every two lines in this kind of song also constitute one unit. If seven-character lines follow in the sequence, singing will be done in the manner of singing songs composed of seven-character lines.

This is all that we know about the ways Miao songs are sung. If there are other ways of singing them, we are not aware of them at present.

(4)

538 The legends of the Miao may be divided into two classes: One comprises those which are indigenous, and the other comprises those which have been introduced from outside. This distinction is immediately apparent when we take a look at the contents of the legends. Moreover, the legends may be divided into two classes from the point of view of form: those which have the same form as the songs, and those which do not. The legends with the same form as the songs are either the texts of the civilian and military Taoist priests, or the various songs for social occasions. These are easily available, since they have been written down. As regards those legends which are not in song form, they have been handed down entirely through oral transmission, and collecting them is difficult.

Of those legends which are indigenous, the most interesting are the ones which explain the process of the creation of heaven and earth and the origin of their ancestors. Two of this kind will be recorded as follows:

539 773

(a) The Little Girl of Fu-chi Sings:
You, drummer, beat the drum of Yang-shou;
Beat the drum again and again.
Hark! The drum is turned to Yang —
The little girl of Fu-chi arrives at the center of the aerials:
Earlier you were at Fu-sang Temple.
The kung-ts'ao /"merit official"/ was ordered to send you an invitation.
At the invitation of your masters,
You rode on the royal horse and came to the site of the altar.

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You dismounted in front of the Heavenly Hall.
You were received at the royal feast to sing your first graces.
You looked at the Emperor and the Empress before you began to sing,
To sing the song of the little girl of Fu-chi:
There is in the official records of the olden days: thunder fell to the ground.
Honorable Chang with his feet kept it in the heart of Ts'ang.
Honorable Thunder said to Honorable Chang:
"Take a basin of water and wash yourself all over.
Take a basin of water and ... all over.
I think it will work to get me out of the heart of Ts'ang."
When Honorable Thunder finally got out of Ts'ang,
He offered his teeth to acknowledge the favor.
The teeth he granted were the seeds of felicity —
In three generations all debts were redeemed.
Then there were a brother and his younger sister to whom Honorable Thunder said:
"Take a knife with sharpened edge and put it in the heart of the stove."
They took a knife with sharpened edge and put it in the heart of the stove.
Then they carried wood and water and put them into the heart of the stove.
When they had filled the stove with wood and water,
They had a dream that in the east there rose a cloud.
The cloud did not seem like a cloud,
It truly was an extraordinary cloud.
Rain fell for seven days and seven nights.
For seven days and seven nights it darkened heaven and earth.
For seven days and seven nights the Flood rose.
The stove was thrown up to the level of heaven.
After seven days and seven nights the Flood subsided;
And the stove fell into the Koulkun Mountains.
Next morning they got up early.

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They had seen in a dream that there was peace but there were no men.

/93/ When they walked past the foot of the /Koulkun/ Mountains,
They met Green Bamboo in the woods.
Then the brother and his younger sister inquired of Green Bamboo:
"Are there any people in the world?"
To the brother and sister Green Bamboo replied:
"There is not a single man in the world,
There is not a single ghost in heaven,
And there is not a single soul on earth,
As all men in the world were drowned by the flood."
He earnestly proposed that the brother and sister should become man and wife.
But the brother and sister were offended.
They chopped Green Bamboo's root with a big sword, and said:
"If you, Green Bamboo, grow together as before,
We, brother and sister, will get married and become man and wife.
If you do not grow whole again,
The world will certainly be without mankind."
If one walks past the foot of the Koulkun Mountains,
One will see the body of Mr. Green Bamboo:
Originally he was without nodes and joints —
Now one will see the scars left by the sister's sword.
Next morning they got up early.
As the cock crowed they ate breakfast, then again went into the woods.
There they inquired of Tortoise:
"Are there any people in the world?"
To the brother and sister Tortoise replied:
"There is not a single man in the world,
There is not a single ghost in heaven,
And there is not a single soul on earth,

/93 cont'd/

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773

As all men in the world were drowned by the flood."
He earnestly proposed that the brother and sister should become man and wife.
/94/ But the brother and sister were offended.
They chopped Tortoise with a big sword, and said:
"If you, Tortoise, grow whole as before,
We, brother and sister, will get married and become man and wife.
If one walks past the foot of the Koulkun Mountains,
One will see the reborn body of Tortoise:
Originally he had a smooth and shining shell —
Now one will see the sword scars there.
Then the hearts of the brother and sister were still unwilling.
They bought and burned incense whose fume rose up to the clouds.
They burned incense in two places;
The fumes of the two crossed and reached the heart of the sky.
They made a vow that they, brother and sister, would become man and wife.
And their marriage lasted spring after spring,
For three and five years as man and wife.
For three and five years they had no child.
Then they gave birth to a lump of blood.
They thought of a plan to make mankind from it.
They made people under three hundred and sixty surnames.
Half of them were officials and the other half were common people.
Mankind did not have rice to eat:
They ate leaves of trees and hearts of rattan.
Mankind did not have clothes to wear:
They used leaves of trees to make gowns and skirts /i.e., women's clothes/.
There were more men than women:
That is why there are bachelors in the world today.
There was once a mouse at the top of Tzu-wei Mountain.

/94 cont'd/

539
773

He was looking around with a seed of grain in his mouth.
Shen Nung /legendary emperor, supposed teacher of husbandry/ took the seed and planted it.
That was the origin of grain.
/95/ That is why today there is enough to eat in the world,
Passed straight down for generations to the present.
Now whosoever believes in him will prosper.
Looking beyond the high mountains the sacred divine one will return.
Shen Nung will arrive at the temple to guard and bless us in person,
To protect us from calamities from heaven and eradicate suffering and ills according to the heart of heaven.
You, drummer, beat the drum of Yang-shou;
Beat the drum again and again.
Hark! the drum is tuned to Yang.
P'an Ku /legendary being who created the universe/ descends to the center of the aerials:
Earlier you were at Ch'ing-tsao Temple.
Because respect was bestowed on you by the masters, you were invited to sing your first graces.
At the words of invitation,
You rode on the royal horse and came to the scene of the aerials.
You dismounted in front of the Heavenly Hall.
You were received at the royal feast to sing your first graces.
You entered the feast and received a drink of An-ch'ih wine,
And sat at the feast and began to sing your first graces.
You looked at the Emperor and the Empress before you began to sing,
To sing of P'an Ku himself.
In the old, old times Emperor P'an Ku
Opened up the first day, in the person of P'an Ku himself.
There was not yet heaven nor earth,
No sun, no moon, nor that which is between heaven and earth.
But there was first the Jade Emperor, as it was told by P'an Ku.

/95 cont'd/

539 773 "The Jade Emperor and I were produced together.
We were not reared by a father and mother.
But we were born out of many-colored dark clouds.
The Jade Emperor evolved many changes in heaven.
He created heaven, earth, and all that which is between heaven and earth.
/96/ The Jade Emperor has three hundred and six transformations of his eyes.
P'an Ku had three hundred and six transformations of his body.
The left eye became the sun;
The right eye became the moon.
The earth on top of the mountains are what was on his head.
The fish in the deep waters are what was his liver and heart.
His teeth became money and jewels.
And his bones became great rocks.
His flesh became golden earth.
His red blood became flowing water in the rivers.
His fingernails became trees in the mountains.
His hands and feet became stars.
His stomach and entrails became the nine bright pearls.
His feet and toes became ponds and pools in the fields.
And the bones and flesh in his whole body were all changed,
The stars and trees were from his body.
Today he comes here to bless us in person,
To eradicate sickness and calamities according to the heart of heaven. (End)

539 (b) Song to be sung at the temple. (The following song is in the form of questions and answers. The words in the parentheses are the answering parts.)

(The first part of the song is omitted here.)

Who opened the sky and established the earth? (Prince P'an)
How many pillars were used in making heaven and earth? (Five)
How many chang between heaven and earth? (Ninety thousand)

7 /96 cont'd/
539

How many chang (Ninety thousand) to heaven and how many wide? (Ninety thousand)
What countries are eight days to the east?
How many provinces are eight days to the south?
How many countries are eight days to the west?
How many people are in the provinces of the eight days to the north?
/97/ How many stars appear in the central sky?
We ask you, officials, to let us know.
We ask you what year was the flood?
Under which emperor were the people killed by the flood?
Which year was it when the flood subsided?
In the beginning how many emperors (Five) crossed the oceans.
Where (The transformed corpse of Buddha after death) did the branches begin to divide?
Which emperor (Li) was born in which palace? (T'ang)
Where did he succeed and how well?
Which emperor (Li) fulfilled which emperor's (P'an's) rule?
Which emperor (P'an) was capable of ruling the world?
Which emperor (P'an) delimited boundaries at which place? (Fu-tze Mts.)
He opened up how many paths (Five) and established what custom? (Marriage)
Which prince (P'an) first established this ceremony?
When it was set up in the world, what was sought? (Descendants)
As for the system of matching horoscopes of betrothed couples, who (Grandson Lü) made it?
What was it made for on this earth? (Marriage)
When matching horoscopes how many characters (Five) are offered...?
When this is done, the characters set up what? (Marriage)
When Emperor P'an was born who brought him up? (Wu...)
He was brought up in what place? (Ch'u Hsien)
Emperor P'an married what family's (Hsien) daughter?

/97 cont'd/

●539 Who (Prince P'ing) arrived at making what (Go-between) custom?
The sacred register was produced in what (T'ang) dynasty?
In which dynasty (Ch'ing) was set up what custom? (Wang Ch'ien)
On what day did the wedding of the Emperor P'an take place?
When was the couple united?
How many (Five) daughters were born to Emperor P'an?
Then /he beckoned for marriage into his family/ what gentleman (Shan-ju) of how many surnames? (Five)
/98/ The first daughter married what surname? (Teng)
The second daughter married what family's young man? (Chiang)
The third daughter married what surname? (Chao)
The fourth daughter married what family's young man? (Li)
The first daughter took care of her father for how many years?
The second daughter took care of her father for how many years?
The fifth daughter took care of her father for how many years?
In the world today how long are parents cared for?
Prince P'an in his lifetime lived how many years? (Five hundred)
Graciously added were how many (Six) tens of springs?
When Emperor P'an made the world, what kind did he make?
He made what kind (Heaven and earth) and set up what custom? (Marriage)
When he made metals, wood, water, fire, and earth,
How did he have being born and dying?
From what (Hair) did he make the Huang-mao Mountains
From what (Bones) did he make Ta-shih /"great stone"/ Mountain?
From what (Hands) did he produce mountain bamboo?
From what (The viscera) did he make mountain rattan?
Who (The Jade Emperor) decided on the rules governing heaven and earth?

/98 cont'd/

539 Who (T'ien Shih*) first settled peace in the world?

/* "heavenly teacher," head of the Taoist sect. —Ed./

In the beginning what (P'ing) prince first sat in the palace?
He sat in what chou /district/? (Peking)
He ruled in what dynasty? (T'ang dynasty)
Emperor P'an delimited boundaries in what place? (Fu-tsu Mountains)
How many (Five) paths were opened up and what custom was established? (Marriage)
We ask you what year (The first year of Chia-tzu) did Ko-tou /?"singing bean"/ die?
Who (Hsien, "immortal") took him and buried him on what mountain?
He was buried on what (Nan, "south") mountain facing what direction?
How many (Five) hundreds of mud bricks were put up in a heap?
/99/ Talk of ancient times is endless;
Let's urge the dragon to go to the feast before us.

539 (c) (The name of this song has been lost; it is also of the
173 question and answer form.)

(Preceding part omitted.)

When heaven was opened and earth established, who did it?
When heaven and earth were made, how many pillars were there?
How many chang were there between heaven and earth?
How many chang to heaven, how many chang wide?
There was both birth and death.
Eight days to the east are what kind of countries?
Eight days to the south are what kinds of gates /?/ ?
Eight days to the west are what kinds of countries?
Eight doors to the north are what kinds of gates?

/99 cont'd/

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Flowing from the center, how many stars appear?
We ask you, Spring Officials, let us know.
We ask you when was the flood?
Under which emperor were the people killed by the flood?
We ask you in which year (The first year of Chia-tze) did the flood subside?
It flowed in what direction? (Koulkun Mts.)
In the beginning how many (Five) princes crossed the oceans?
Where (Transformed corpse) did the branches begin to divide?
What (P'an) prince was born in what palace? (Me-shui Palace)
Where did he succeed (Ch'ing Dynasty) and how (Ten thousand soldiers) well?
Which emperor (Li) fulfilled which (P'an) emperor's rule?
Which (P'an) emperor was capable of ruling the world?
Which (P'an) emperor delimited boundaries at what place? (Fu-tze Mts.)
He opened up how many (Five) paths, and established what custom? (Marriage)
/100/ In the beginning this rule was made by whom? (Emperor P'an)
When it was set up in the world, who (Descendants) was sought?
As for the system of matching horoscopes of betrothal couples, who (Lü Tsai) devised it?
When it was devised in the world, it concluded what custom? (Marriage)
When matching horoscopes, how many (Seven) characters are offered...?
When this is done, how many (Eight) characters conclude what custom? (Marriage)
As for Emperor P'an, who (Wu-yün) brought him up in the beginning?
He was brought up in what place? (Ch'u Hsien)
The sacred register was produced in what dynasty? (Ch'ing)
Which (Ch'ing) dynasty set up what custom? (Imperial Gate)
Emperor P'an married what (Hsien) family's daughter?

/100 cont'd/

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Who (Emperor P'ing) proposed the use of go-betweens?
As for Emperor P'an ... how many daughters?
Then he beckoned /for marriage into his family/ what young men of how many (five) surnames?
The first daughter married what (Teng) surname?
The second daughter married what (Chiang) family's young man?
The third daughter married what (Chao) surname?
The fourth daughter married what (Li) family's young man?
The fifth daughter married what (The family register is unclear) surname?
In the world today what is the custom for union? (Marriage)
The first daughter took care of her father for how many years?
The second daughter took care of her father for how many springs?
The fifth daughter took care of her father for how many years?
In the world today how are parents cared for?
The fifth daughter respectfully cared for them
And her parents lived a long time for many springs.
Her kindness was exalted and endless.
The record even though unclear mentions this and tells us about it.
Emperor P'an in his lifetime lived how many (Five hundred) years?
Graciously added to his life were how many (Sixty) springs?
/101/ Talk of ancient days are endless;
Let's urge the dragon to go to the feast before us.

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Because these historical legends are all rhymed songs made of lines of seven words each, they are frequently sung: The first, (a), is sung by the Taoist priests during the "tso chai" ceremony. The next two, (b) and (c), are sung at wedding feasts with groups of men and women as the opposing singing parties. Interestingly, the contents of these legends provide answers to questions related to the origin of mankind, such as the creation of heaven and earth, the calamity of

/101 cont'd/

533 the flood, the coming into existence of mankind, the life story of
538 P'an Ku /The Creator/, the evolutionary process of social systems,
173 and the origin of their ancestors, etc. Moreover, there is another interesting legend of the Miao which tells the story of their ancestors. This is not in song form. It is given here as follows:

539 Once upon a time there lived a certain wealthy man who had a
773 daughter. But the wealthy man's daughter was betrothed to an extremely poor family. When she was of marriageable age, she still was not yet married. It so happened that the daughter had a pet dog. She was so fond of her dog that she ate and slept with him. In time she had sexual relations with the dog and became pregnant. When her fiance's family became aware of this, they informed the authorities. The official investigated the case from many angles, but failed to identify the party who had wronged her. Eventually, the official's wife thought of a scheme. She took the daughter out of jail and took the girl to live with her in her own room. In the middle of night when the daughter was fast asleep, the official's wife opened up the girl's clothes and found marks of scratches by dog claws on her body. The whole mystery was thus unveiled. Thereupon the district official questioned the members of the girl's family. It was found that the girl actually had a pet dog. He then ordered that this dog be taken to be with the girl at the jail. Sure enough when night fell, the dog was actually found to scratch fiercely at the girl. The whole case was thus solved. When the fiance's family learned that the girl had had relations with the dog and had thus become pregnant, they cancelled the betrothal unconditionally. After being released from jail, the girl soon gave birth to a boy and a girl. Greatly disgraced by this scandal, the girl's parents ordered a carpenter to build a boat and loaded it with gold, silver, gems, and pearls. The daughter, dog, and the two children were driven into the boat and set afloat. The boat floated about and drifted to the city of Hui-chou, where it was caught and pulled to land by some people. Then the four of them settled in this city. The dog often went to the mountains to capture birds and animals to feed the two children. The children gradually grew up but still did not know

/101 cont'd/

539 they were children of a dog. One day /102/ when the dog, feeling
773 lazy, did not go to the mountains to hunt, he was beaten by the two children. Upon this, their mother scolded them severely and told them the truth. She said that they were born of her union with the dog and that the dog was in fact their father. She further told them that since they were children of a dog, nobody would ever want to marry them. It was thus wise that they should marry each other in order to continue the line. After the brother and sister were married, they had two boys. When they grew up, the two boys were not able to get along with each other and often quarreled. Their mother became disgusted and drove them out. One fled up to the mountain, and the other down to the sea. The one who went up the mountain became the ancestor of the Miao; the one who went down to the sea became the ancestor of the Tanka /boat people of Canton/. Henceforth, the descendants of these two groups have not walked on the prince's land nor paid taxes.

773 This legend gives us a picture of how the ancestors of the Miao were symbolically conceived of by them (i.e., born of a dog), what kind of economic life they led at the beginning (i.e., hunting), and what kind of marriages between those of the same blood originally existed among them (i.e., marriage between brother and sister), and also what the relationship between the two groups, Miao and Tanka, was like, etc. What important implications all this revealed to us in our study of the Miao social system!

538 As regard to the legends which were brought to the Miao from outside, these are numerous. Due to limited space here, only the following sample, which consists of a section of the sad and romantic story of a Mr. Yen Hui and a Miss Chang Meng-wo is given here:

539 The Ancient Song of Meng-wo

Speaking at leisure of old tales and books,
Let me sing the story of Meng-wo.
Thousands of other old tales have been told over and over again,
Let me sing now the story of Meng-wo:

/102 cont'd/

539 Mr. Chang lived in a place both high and low.
He lived in a place named Chang Pai Ch'ang.
The family had three thousand strings of cash .
East, west, south, and north they had established farms.
/103/ Mr. Chang had no son but had two daughters.
The two of them made a couple, which excelled any son:
The elder daughter was named Precious Gem;
And the younger one was named Chang Meng-wo.
The elder one had natural skill in weaving thin brocade embroidery;
The younger one had natural skill in weaning silk gauze.
They wove the Yellow River with nine turns.
They wove ducks and drakes paired with male and female phoenixes.
They wove male and female unicorns paired with lions.
They wove fierce tigers paired with leopards.
When their needlework was compared,
The tapestry was no better than the silk gauze.
Everything that was woven by them was real:
It is good art to write like the teacher and to render the tiger real.
The elder daughter was married at eighteen to a secretary of state.
594 539 The younger at fifteen left her parents.
When Meng-wo was about seventeen or eighteen,
She had never stepped outside the front door.
Now in the Upper Village there was a knowledgable old woman named Huang.
She wrote out young girls' fortunes and acted as a go-between.
She wrote out fortunes in all the chous /districts/.
In the nine chous and ten districts /hsien/, she was without parallel in this.
She came then to try her book, at the house of the young gentleman Yen,
Who was highly literate and knew the Three-Character Classic by heart.

/103 cont'd/

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People say it was in the third month when flowers bloom in wild profusion.
The two sisters wanted to go out to look at the fragrant flowers.
This morning they did now know what their fate would be during the year.
The two bowed deeply and said:
"If you, father and mother, give us the word,
We 'll go back to comb and dress ourselves.
/104/ If you, father and mother, do not give us permission,
We shall not dare go out the door."
Their father and mother replied:
"Listen to what we say, daughters,
When you go, take your horoscopes.
Go together and come home early, both of you."
Upon these words from the mouths of their father and mother,
They went to comb and dress themselves up for the trip.
Their hairdo had been in the style of a coiling dragon's moustache;
Now they made one of the style named "Looking for a Husband."
They looked in the bronze mirror placed in front of them.
Their faces were like that of the young girl of the village in the Peach Paradise.
Long and short golden hairpins were inserted all over the hair,
Well stuck in on the four sides, high and up.
They walked like Kuan Yin /Goddess of Mercy/ when about to come out from the sea,
And sat like the immortal of the village in the Peach Paradise.
Passing through the east street to the south street,
Across the west street and back from the north street,
And at the crossroads and thoroughfares,
Their looks excelled that of all the people in the whole district of Tuan-lieh.
The district of Tuan-chou did not have /sic/ thousands and tens of thousands,

/104 cont'd/

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But only Meng-wo's looks stood out.
Walking further they came to a flower garden village.
Behold, flowers flourished on the trees,
They saw tender peach blossoms just opened up.
Half of the leaves on the trees were green, and the other half yellow.
Yellow bees pierced the flowers in pairs,
Butterflies sojourned on trees in couples.
Yen Hui, attired in finely embroidered silk and satin,
Passed by on horseback and saw Meng-wo.
/105/ "Little girl, whose family do you come from?
What do your father and mother call you?"
Meng-wo replied to Yen Hui,
"Hsiu tsai", please listen to my words.

/" A graduate of the former first degree in the Chinese examination system. /

My father is called Elder Chang,
He produced me as the little girl named Chang Meng-wo.
May I inquire hsiu tsai's honorable name?
What is your order in the family?"
Yen Hui replied to Meng-wo, saying:
"Beautiful one, please listen to my words,
I am the third son of the Hui family.
I have come here to have a look at the flowers."
They did not dare to tarry too long in the garden of flowers,
They returned to their respective homes.
Their affinity had been set in a previous life.
Now they met as drake and duck.
Returning home and sitting in his private room,
Yen Hui began to think in his heart,
During the day he thought endlessly and did not eat.
At night he thought endlessly and could not sleep.
Mr. Yen, hearing of his son's tears,

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Talked the matter over with his wife.
"We have brought you up to an adult, Yen Hui.
A man's life is like the autumn grass."
Yen Hui immediately replied:
"Father, please listen to my words.
If you want me to marry someone, don't choose a girl from another family.
I wish to take pretty Chang Meng-wo."
To this Mr. Yen immediately replied:
"My son, please listen to my words.
/106/ Man and wife are predestined in the previouls life.
What is regulated in the previous life determines a couple.
If it is predestined, you will meet each other.
If it is not predestined, the two of you will part."
Yen Hui replied to his father and mother,
"Father, listen to my words.
If I can have the Chang family's daughter,
I am willing to die on the third day."
Hearing these words, Mr. Yen began to think in his heart.
The next morning he called for the old woman Huang.
And asked the old woman Huang to act as go-between.
He asked that the old woman Huang hurry,
And go to the house of Chang to act as go-between.
She went to Mr. Chang's and sat in the doorway.
Mr. Chang invited her into the upper hall.
And asked the old woman Huang to sit down in the upper hall.
Tea and boiling soup were prepared in the kitchen.
After the tea came and before they had drunk three cups,
Then the old woman Huang began to talk.
"What have you come here about, old woman Huang?"
The old woman Huang blushed as she was about to speak.
Mr. Chang said to the old woman Huang:
"Whatever you have to say, please do so freely."
The old woman Huang replied to Mr. Chang:
"Please listen to my words.

/106 cont'd/

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People say that your family has a daughter,
Who is now at the proper age of eighteen."
Mr. Chang replied to the old woman Huang:
"If the horoscopes are in harmony, then a union may be made."
/107/ The old woman Huang replied to Mr. Chang, saying:
"There are also the betrothal gifts which should come in pairs of gold and silver."
Mr. Chang replied to the old woman Huang, saying:
"Please listen to my words.
First, there must be five hundred strings of copper coins.
Second, there must be three pecks of pearls.
Third, there must be fifty pairs of gold hairpins.
Fourth, there must be fifty pairs of spun silks.
Fifth, there must be fifty pairs of gold hens.
Sixth, there must be ten pairs of dragon geese.
Seventh, there must be fifty pairs of large pigs.
Eighth, there must be fifty pairs of silky sheep.
Ninth, there must be thirty-six containers /?/ of wine.
Tenth, there must be silver cups to cover the container tops.
If you can get all these ten gifts,
You can make a match for Meng-wo."
When Yen Hui heard these words,
He immediately began to think in his heart.
Opening up the south storehouse of betrothal gifts,
He took out gold and silver by tens of thousands.
He took out copper coins by the thousand and tens of thousands strings.
He took out three pecks of pearls.
He took out fifty pairs of gold hairpins.
He took out fifty pairs of spun silks.
He took out fifty pairs of gold hens.
He took out fifty pairs of silky sheep.
He took out fifty pairs of large pigs.
He took out fifty pairs of dragon geese.
He took out thirty-six containers of wine.

/107 cont'd/

●539 He took out silver cups to cover the container tops.
584 /108/ Eight hundred men carried the wealth of gifts,
On the way to the betrothal of Meng-wo.
831 But not half a month after the betrothal was made,
539 Yen Hui fell ill and lay on the high bed.
First they wrote a letter reporting that he was ill.
Second they wrote a letter reporting that he was dead.
The letter arrived while she was eating.
Tears blowed in her eyes, dropping in pairs.
She put down her chopsticks and read the message.
Read it once, then read it again.
In the message there were no idle words.
There was but sad news that the two were parted.
Meng-wo undid her coiling dragon hairdo and put on the mourning sign.
She took off the gold hairpins and put them inside the dragon box.
Mr. Chang went to the Upper Village to borrow a big horse;
Meng-wo went to the Lower Village and borrowed a sedan chair.
Mr. Chang mounted the horse and went with bowed head.
Meng-wo was behind him still proud and fine.
Mr. Chang turned his head and scolded his daughter:
"Whose family ever brought up a girl to go looking for a man?"
Meng-wo answered her father, saying:
"I am going to the house of Yen to burn filial incense.
Where has there ever been an ox yoked with two yokes?
A horse saddled with two saddles?
A bow fitted with two arrows?
Or a girl who married two husbands?
It is difficult for a horse with two saddles to carry passengers on his back.
A girl married to two men would be the laughing stock of all."
They arrived and were seated in the main hall of the house of Yen,

/108 cont'd/

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They opened up the coffin and took a look at the corpse within.
/109/ Meng-wo's tears flowed in streams.
Then she said to Mr. Yen:
"With the heart to raise your son you did not have the heart to save him.
Now my feelings are in a turmoil.
Livestock, big and small, must not have been slaughtered.
White paper and incense must not have been burned.
Who did not make wishes before the gods?
Who did not burn incense before the altar?"
Hearing Meng-wo's words, Mr. Yen replied:
"Little girl, please listen to my words.
We raised our son with our whole hearts to provide against old age:
To store up grains is to guard against famine in the distant future.
Livestock, big and small, have been slaughtered.
Thousands of pieces of white paper, gold and silver have been burned.
In the morning we killed pigs and sheep as offerings to the ghosts.
At night we killed chickens and ducks as offerings to the five shang /persons who died young/.
Containers of wine were continuously placed on the altar.
Wine was poured before the shrine to make a paste.
Everything was done, but our good wishes were of no avail.
'I'll never get out of bed.'
We replied to our son, saying:
'My son, what has caused your ailment?'
Yen Hui replied to us, saying:
'Please listen to my words now:
I am now struck with a serious illness.
My life will shortly end, and I'll see Yen Wang (king of hell).
When the oil is burned up the light in the lamp coldly dies.
Giving up life, I shall shortly come to Yen Wang.'

/109 cont'd/

631 To this we replied, saying:
539 'Son, why do you utter these words?
/110/ You have been betrothed for only half a month on this earth.
Why do you give up life and go to the place of the departed?'
Yen Hui replied to us, saying:
'Father and mother, please listen to my words.
When death arrives, there is no distinction between old and young.
The breath in my throat is getting short--I cannot bear it for long.
Everyone in the world wants to live a hundred years.
I am unlucky, and my life cannot be long.
Yen Wang does not care whether a person is old or young.
He does not think of it when he marks with his pen in the register.
Everyone wants to be a son of heaven.
My luck is short, and I cannot desire so much.
Please send word to my betrothed:
I pray that Meng-wo will marry another man.'
Then his body was bathed with scented water,
And placed in a coffin of red silk.
Before yellow leaves have fallen, a green one has dropped.
We sent cassocks everywhere for people to wear.
We know that Meng-wo's gods have taken his life away.
We know that our son's life was short."
When Meng-wo heard these words
She meditated for a long time.
Then she took a key and opened a basket.
She took a key and opened a box.
She took out red silk cloth two changs long.
She took out red silk cloth two changs long.
At the first night watch she hung herself, at the second night watch she was dead.
Husband and wife both lay dead in the hall.

/110 cont'd/

M 831 539

Then they bought a long plank of wood,
For Meng-wo to be put upon.
/111/ When the Taoist priests had finished the funeral ceremony,
Husband and wife were sent up the hillside.
They were carried over the Yellow River with nine turns.
They were carried over the Yellow River with nine turns.
On the left there was the Green Dragon, on the right the White Tiger.
From behind the Jade Goddess protects their grave site.
In front the scarlet bird* comes to pay its respects.

/* A position in geomancy. /

At the back were fierce tigers facing spotted leopards.
Sing to the end the ancient tale of Meng-wo.
So that it will be spread over the five lakes and the four seas.

M 538

In addition to the above, there are the Song of San Pe Ying T'ai /"the three heroic elders"/, the Song of Chiu Niang /"the three girls"/, the Song of T'ang Hsien Chang Shih Niang /"the ten women of T'ang Hsien Chang"/, the Song of Mai Ch'en, etc. All of them are well engraved in the heart of every Miao. Because they are all lengthy pieces, space does not permit us to include them in the present report.

/112/ Chapter IX. Intergroup Relations between the Chinese, the Li, and the Miao.

(1)

M H 648 121

The Chinese constitute the majority of the inhabitants of Hainan Island. Next are the Li and the Miao. The intergroup relationship of the three ethnic groups—the Chinese, the Li, and the Miao, particularly the first two—has constituted an /important/ part of the history of Hainan, and naturally it still will be at the core of problems

/96 cont./

583 get busy with the bride's marriage portion. Most commonly it consists of one or two trunks, four or five garments making one outfit, two pairs of trousers, and a suit of clothes for the groom.
[301] Such women's ornaments as earrings, rings, bracelets, and neck rings have been sent previously by the groom's family to the bride's, or silver is sent instead for the bride's family to have the ornaments made of it. On the day set the groom's
585 family send along wine, meat, firecrackers, incense and candles, and torches, and recently they include sedan chairs or chairs. When they arrive before the entrance of the bride's
[177] family, recently, in imitation of the Chinese custom, they close the entrance and demand money for opening the gate in the sum of eight hundred cash or one string /one thousand/ of cash. Further, they intentionally curse the go-between and complain that the gifts of wine and meat sent by the boy's
[756] family are not enough. The bride then gets dressed up, and
[782] meanwhile a Miao sorcerer is invited to make sacrifices to the ancestors. A square table is laid with sacrificial items, incense
[787] and candles, and the sorcerer priest recites incantations, kowtows, and performs divination with straws, to cut off the powers of evil. He lights two torches, opens a parasol, and invites the bride to come out to kowtow three times to the ancestral tablet. After this she kowtows once to her parents, once to all her brothers and paternal male cousins, and once to her maternal grandparents. This done, she turns around facing outside and
[556] mounts the sedan chair (in a rich family) or walks (middle-class family), holding a half-opened parasol. The brothers, sisters, cousins, mother's married sisters, mother's brothers wives, and mother of the bride accompany her on the way. If the bride arrives too early at her husband's house, she has to wait in a side building or take a rest in a neighbor's house. At
585 that time a table is laid in front of the entrance with incense
782 and candles, a piece of cooked meat, and three cups of wine.
[75] A guest sorcerer offers the following prayer:

[539] "The day is auspicious, the moment is opportune,
Heaven and earth open out.

/96 cont./

585
782
539

The bride arriving here brings
Great luck and great prosperity.
The peach tree is young and beautiful and upright!
The maiden goes to her bridegroom's house to become a pair of phoenixes.
Acting correctly toward the members of the family, she descends from the sedan chair,
Lightly she moves with short steps into the decorated hall.
The bride's family's carriage and horses turn and go back.
The husband's carriage and horses come out to welcome her.
And after this exchange of carriages and horses,
Heaven will be long and earth lasting;
Earth will be lasting and heaven long."

At this point he takes hold of a cock and continues:

"This chicken is not an ordinary one,
It is the chicken which announces dawn to the Prince's Mother.
Wearing a heroic comb and a fine beak,
Dressed in silk gauze clothes in five hues,
People of this world have no use for it.
/97/ But I use it to exorcise evil influences,
Of heaven and earth,
Of the year, the month, the day, the hour,
[776] And of the twelve evil spirits.
The evil influences of heaven return to heaven;
Of the earth returns to Hades.
Thus, the evil spirits retreat
And the lucky stars descend."

On finishing the incantation he bites open the comb of the cock and sprays its blood on the ground. Returning to the house, he sets another square table like the one before and continues:

"O! ye, holy spirits of the heavens
And the holy spirits of the earth!

/97 cont./

585 I am invoking the benignant spirits of union
782 To this mundane world.
539 The mission is none other than
[776] To officiate at this marriage rite.
We ask the Heaven Uniting Spirit,
The Earth Uniting Spirit,
The Year Uniting Spirit,
The Day Uniting Spirit,
The Hour Uniting Spirit,
The twelve uniting spirits and twelve uniting fairies,
Tung Wang Kung /Lord of the East, leader of the male immortals/
Hsi Wang Mu /Lady of the West, " " " female immortals/
[821] The Cowherd and the Weaving Girl /names of stars/
And the Old Immortal in the moon."

585 At this point he takes a cup of wine and a piece of meat,
[788] and writes out an incantation. After burning this he asks the
groom to drink half of the wine and to eat half of the meat,
[264] the rest being for the bride when she comes in. These are called
the uniting wine and the uniting meat. After the sorcerer priest
[756] has finished this performance, he sets off firecrackers and leads
the bride into the house through a small side door. She sits
down beside the fire pit, in which a huge fire has been started.
The chair is placed slightly farther away for fear that the fire
would give out too much heat. The chair cannot be pushed
[777] backward; it can only be pulled forward. The movement back-
ward is recognized to be inauspicious; the forward movement
then is auspicious. The sitting direction must be facing inside
or in the direction of the ancestral tablet. After being seated
she first washes her face with water. It has been boiled in a
[824] cooking pot with t'ung grass, pa-lun grass, and huang-mao
grass, taken out and put in a basin, and incantations written
and recited. While the bride is washing her face, the sorcerer
[756] priest sweeps with a broom several times behind her. After
washing, she eats the meat and drinks the wine left by the groom.

/235 cont./

857 is smeared on it. After a number of days it is washed away,
304 revealing the tattooed design, the color of which remains permanently.

The adult amusements of the Miao, such as shaking the
517 dragon lantern, shaking the lion, boxing, and tilting are the
526 same as those of the Chinese /Illus. 117-20, pp. 236-38/,
[177] /239/ and probably were introduced by the latter. But one kind
[411] of their tilting, in which a weapon called tz'u-ch'a /"stabbing prong"/ (Illus. 119), is used, is not often seen. According to Miao legend, this is a weapon for stabbing tigers.

(4) Swings

526 Among the Miao there is a swing game, which is quite
[527] interesting. On farm holidays when there are fairs or during the New Year festival, they put up frameworks for swings on a vacant lot. Each framework supports two swings, and every swing has four compartments, each fastened with ropes and a board. Each swing seats four men or women, going around
[533] with the wheel (Illus. 120). Men and women sing back and forth as they swing along (see chapter, "Folk Songs" /not
539 translated/). The following song is about the origin of the swing:
773
526

Songs and singing are as old as time,
Found in all books everywhere.
A son of a unicorn was born in the
Sung dynasty.
The young man with a clever mind sought
a mate.

He searched for a beauty but was
ashamed of his own ugliness.
He loved beauty but beauty was
hard to meet.
He asked someone for a plan.
And was told to make a swing for people
to enjoy.

[text continues on p 356]

/239 cont./

539
526
773

Shouting, he made known his invitation.
A maid from the Sleeping Tiger Mountain,
Came to ride on the eight-men swing.
She was loved by all present.
Soon, a go-between was found —
Man and wife were joined together for a
hundred years.

4:Mickey E-5 (1940-?)1947 AE5 Miao AE5

883 It might have been of the sort that existed
in An-lung Hsien. There between the time
836 of her betrothal and her marriage, which were
arranged by the two families, a Miao girl
would, without letting her family know, very
often have relations with a young man of her
own choosing, and bear him a child. I was
told that often a husband would not acknowl-
edge the first child, even if it were a son, and
that when family property was divided this
child would receive no share. The mother,
however, usually managed to get money for
her love child, so that he might not be with-
out inheritance. From the similarity of the
songs sung in the two places, I suspected that
the same thing went on in a Cowrie Shell Miao
village. Here are translations of the two songs.
The one from An-lung was definitely an in-
vitation from a young man for sexual inter-
course. Some girls were more forward and
grasping than others. I noticed that Mo-mei
managed matters so that she and the girls she
favored got most of the attention.

883 THE AN-LUNG MIAO SONG

836 For a long time I have been coming here.
The cool water here produces cool melons.
539 If one opens the melon he may drink cool water.
If you will not be my sweetheart, I shall not come
again.

THE COWRIE SHELL MIAO SONG

On the top of the high mountain is planted a red
flower.
Younger sister (I) cannot hope that older brother
(you) will come.
Older brother (you) has ten years moved the
flower;
In ten places there has been communication, in nine
places complete.
The road is long, the *ma ts'ao* is red.

883 Now and then on clear, moonlit nights the
535 young men of the village brought out their
lu sheng and the girls danced. Otherwise one
533 heard the *lu sheng* only when they were prac-
tising the rhythm and tunes — usually of an
evening after work — at a bullfight, when the
young people were together in a village after
a bullfight or a wedding, and at a funeral.
Then the dancing, accompanied by drum and
lu sheng, went on from dusk till dawn for as
many as four successive nights.

534 The *lu sheng* was made of wood, and was [50a]
also called the *liu sheng* because it had six

576 one another's left shoulder and asking "*Dieh zao nioh gioh?*"—"Are you well?" An adult greets children by rubbing or patting his or her head. The form of farewell is (the host) "Go slowly, go slowly" (the parting guest) "Sit slowly, sit slowly". They are wonderfully hospitable and guests are expected to eat to satisfy. How often the traveller sees them stuff away basin after basin of maize until he fears there will be a terrible accident! People will go short themselves so that visitors be generously treated. Should a guest be of some importance a goat or sheep is slain and cooked—it is not always meticulously clean—and upon the departure of the guest a leg of the animal is always given to him. A non-observance of this custom would be a serious breach of good manners, as also it would be to refuse food to even a casual visitor. Hospitality is as characteristic of them as of the Arab, and a Miao will borrow food to entertain a guest. Though poor, thriftless and no lovers of fighting, they are simple and generous, honest and lovable. One of the child races of the world, they are as old as the Chinese, and when Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, the Miao were hunting wild beasts on their beloved hills and at the close of day their bards would sing a Miao version of the Creation, the Flood, and the Re-population of the World; and story-tellers would narrate quaint legends which have been handed down to this generation. Here is one. Would not Kipling have enjoyed it?

574 181

773 Long, long ago, instead of there being only one

•539

sun in the skies, there were six, and in those days the world was beautifully warm. One year, however, the rain refused to come and by degrees all vegetables and trees were withered. A meeting of the old men was held to discuss what could be done. One man said this and another that until it was finally decided that the suns must be shot. A famous archer called Yang Yah was called and ordered to shoot the suns. Bringing his cross-bow and arrows, Yang Yah looked up at the suns and observed they were a long distance away. Fortunately, near by, there was a small lake in which all six suns were reflected and the happy thought came to Yang Yah that if he could shoot the reflections the same purpose would be served as hitting the suns themselves. Adjusting an arrow and taking careful aim, he released the trigger and hit sun number one right in the centre, upon which sun number one promptly disappeared. He shot a second arrow and sun number two disappeared, and so on with suns number, three, four and five, but as Yang Yah adjusted his arrow to shoot sun number six, this sun became vastly afraid and away it went beyond the horizon. The next morning—well, really there wasn't a next morning, as the sun refused to come out and day after day darkness was upon the face of the earth. To bring water from the springs people had to carry torches, and to plough the land, lights were suspended from the horns of the cows. What was to be done? A second gathering of the old men of the tribe was held; once more one man suggested this and another

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suggested that, until finally it was proposed that some one should call to the sun and ask him to come out, assuring him that no one would shoot him. But how were they to call to the sun? It was thought that a tiger would be able to do this rather well; so one was brought and loudly it roared. "Dear me!" thought the sun, "the people are still angry with me, I won't go out yet." Then some one wondered whether it wouldn't be a good thing to use a cow to call to the sun. The lowing of a cow is far-reaching and yet not so frightening as the roar of a tiger. So a cow was brought and loudly it lowed. "Aha!" thought the sun, "they are not quite so displeased with me as they were, but they are still angry; so I won't go out yet." Then some one had the happy idea of using a cock; the crow of a cock is far-reaching yet pleasing, and being placed on a perch, it crowed lustily. "What a very nice sound that is," thought the sun, "I'll just look out to see what is happening," and he peeped over the horizon. People were so pleased to see him that they shouted for joy. The sun was quite as delighted as the people, and from the red of the morning he fashioned a little comb which he placed on the head of the cock. Now every morning, before the sun comes out, the cock crows to tell him it is all right, no one will shoot him.

5: Hudspeth M-5 (no date) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

797 devotion to Christ fascinated me. I have listened to him preach the Gospel in brilliant Chinese and then go into our Stone-Gateway Chapel and in Miao sway an audience of a thousand tribesmen. He would discuss plans and schemes with Miao deacons, comfort and encourage mothers and then romp like a boy with Miao children who, when he said good-bye, would sit by the wayside and cry as though their little hearts would break. I longed to become like him. "Flowers of God's heart" he used to call the kiddies, and woe betide any one who caused one of these to stumble.

One of the greatest difficulties with which the White Teacher was confronted was that the Miao possessed no written characters. Pollard solved the problem by providing phonetic signs to represent Miao sounds and by adapting the system employed in shorthand of vocalising consonants. This system of writing came to be known as "The Pollard Script" and since it was quickly and easily learned by the Miao, they became proud of having their language in a written form which they could call their own. Pollard used the script for the translation of passages of scripture, hymns and simple Christian doctrines, and afterwards primers were prepared. Later the Gospel of St. Mark and other Gospels were translated and put into circulation and no one will ever be able to calculate the enormous influence which the light-giving Word has exerted on
797 the Miao. Before the Pollard script, books and a
212 library were unknown. The great majority of
539 these tribesmen had never handled even a sheet of

5: Hudspeth M-5 (no date) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

writing paper or a pen. They had heard that once upon a time there were books; a tribal legend described how long, long ago the Miao lived on the north side of the Yangtze River, but the conquering Chinese came and drove them from their land and homes. Coming to the river and possessing no boats they debated what should be done with the books and in the end they strapped them to their shoulders and swam across, but the water ran so swiftly and the river was so wide, that the books were washed away and fishes swallowed them. This was the story. When the British and Foreign Bible Society sent the first Gospels and these were distributed the legend grew—the-once-upon-a-time lost books had been found, found in the white man's country, and they told the incomparable story that Jesus loved the Miao. Only the imagination can conceive what this meant to those hillmen; some of whom travelled for days to view the books. The establishment of schools brought light and understanding to the minds of both boys and girls; fathers would undertake all the work in their fields so that a son might be free to study; and mothers carrying supplies to their boys at school would trudge weary miles over hills and mountains.

On September 15th, 1915, Samuel Pollard, the greatest missionary who ever worked in South-West China, passed into eternal rest. For eleven years he had lived day and night for his Miao who, when he died, said to his lifelong chum, Frank Dymond: "He is ours, let us bury him; we will

one meets with legends which might be termed universal, but there is a charm about some of these that bears translation into English. This is the story of Nglieh-giah.

539 The *nglieh-giah* is a small bird, a little bigger than a sparrow. It is very dark blue in colour with a snow-white head and in South-West China it is always seen by the side of streams or rivers, hopping from stone to stone or flitting from rock to rock, ever gazing into the water as though searching for something. Legend says that long, long ago Nglieh-giah, as a youth, fell in love with the daughter of the king of under-the-waters. Her name was Ngu-Za-Nieh-Bang. Nglieh-giah's wooing was successful and the day came when he proudly led her as his bride to the poor little hut where he lived. Nglieh-giah was so destitute that he had no cattle, but his wife was more than equal to this. She sent him to her father with instructions that when her father wished to give him a present, as he undoubtedly would do, Nglieh-giah was to decline everything and later to ask for two hairs from his father-in-law's beard. These were to be placed in a covered basket which Ngu-Za-Nieh-Bang gave to Nglieh-giah at the same time explaining that though as he returned home the basket would grow heavier and heavier, he was on no account to look within. Away went Nglieh-giah to his father-in-law's home and as had been said he was offered this and that, but declining every proffered gift he asked for two hairs from his host's beard, and these being given to him they were placed in the

basket and the lid put on. Then Nglieh-giah 539
started on his homeward journey. As he went along the basket became heavier and heavier, until Nglieh-giah, unable to restrain his curiosity any longer, peeped inside, when behold there jumped out all kinds of wild beasts—tigers and leopards, wolves and bears, and many other kinds too, and there flew out all kinds of birds—crows, magpies, eagles and kites, red-billed jays and pheasants, larks and thrushes. The lid was shut quickly, but not before these had escaped. When Nglieh-giah reached home and gave the basket to his wife, she scolded him severely for opening it since now, she said, our animals will be few. We will only have chickens, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, horses, cats and dogs. With the passing of time, by the help and wisdom of his wife, Nglieh-giah grew rich, but alas, he grew tired of Ngu-Za-Nieh-Bang and his love towards her waxed cold. One day he was invited to a feast given by Pluto, king of the underworld and being a good piper Nglieh-giah became very popular, and after this he was asked frequently to Pluto's realm. Now Pluto had two beautiful daughters who were much admired by Nglieh-giah and one day he asked them to marry him. "But you already have a wife," said these girls, "you must first get rid of her." Angry and disappointed, Nglieh-giah returned home and, quarrelling with his wife, he said he didn't want her any more and that she must go away. His wife begged him not to behave in such an ungallant manner, but Nglieh-giah became so querulous and ungracious

539 that at length Ngu-Za-Nieh-Bang said that since he had brought her from the waters he must take her back to the river. Nglieh-giah did this, and as his wife walked into the river she once more begged him not to give her up, but Nglieh-giah had grown hard and cruel and he wouldn't change his mind. Farther and farther she walked into the river, begging that he would not send her away, but Nglieh-giah insisted on her going. Just before Ngu-Za-Nieh-Bang disappeared under the waters she waved a rattan stick which she was carrying and suddenly all her cattle came scampering up and they too disappeared with her under the water. On Nglieh-giah's returning home he discovered that all his cattle had vanished, even his gala clothes had gone. However, taking his reed pipes he went off to Pluto's home but here, too, things had changed. Instead of being petted and welcomed by Pluto's daughters, he was ridiculed and spat upon by them, who told him he was ugly and poor and altogether undesirable. Disappointed and filled with remorse, Nglieh-giah went back to the river, where he wandered up and down the banks looking for his wife. Meeting a frog he was asked what was the matter and bursting into tears Nglieh-giah told his uncle, the frog, all that had happened.

"Oh," said the frog, "I'll help you. I'll swallow the water, only you must not laugh." The frog commenced to swallow, but on seeing its stomach growing bigger and bigger Nglieh-giah laughed outright, whereupon all the water came back.

Presently he met a toad who also enquired what was the matter and who, on the same condition as had been made by the frog, offered to swallow the water. So the toad commenced to swallow and eventually there at the bottom of the river Nglieh-giah saw his pretty wife sitting at her loom weaving snowy white cloth. Hastening down to her he said how very, very sorry he was for all that had happened and begged her to return to him. "No, no," she said, "I cannot come back, but I will give you this length of cloth," and taking a knife she cut from the loom the cloth she was weaving, and this Nglieh-giah wound round his head. To this very day you may still see Nglieh-giah hopping from stone to stone or flitting from rock to rock ever looking for his wife.

With stories like these they beguile the hours till it is time to sleep.

On the following morning after breakfast, members and scholars will gather to wish us God-speed. They will walk with us some two or three miles, and then, arranging themselves, the group will sing "Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah" or one of their many hymns, the whole hillside re-echoing to their singing. After praying with them and saying "good-bye" we will mount our ponies and set off to some other out-station. It always makes one sad to say good-bye; it is like leaving a few sheep in a wilderness. As we move along we will sometimes hear young shepherds singing hymns which have become very dear to them: "Oh happy day", "Rock of Ages", and those simple but heart-

[19 cont.]

836 embracing.) So, pre-marital relations between men and women are rare if not altogether absent. The following are some of the love songs they sing to each other in free translation:

539

I

You seem not to care for me,
But with you I'm in love.
It is as keen as a dagger,
For you are too beautiful.

When I scale the mountain peak,
Day and night my thoughts wander,
Your image they continue to seek.
What magic have you yonder?

II

Ye maids who marriage have not known,
How many are there in your village?
One of you I wish to call my own
To share my route and tillage.
In the village we shall sit, you and I,
For shortly we shall be two genii.

III

In that village there are pretty flowers,
In that village there are pretty maids;
Their faces are like snow flakes on the bowers,
Their brows, a crescent moon that never fades.
Please, send me one to adore,
And I shall never ask for more.

[20]

IV

● 539 Now we sing together a mountain song,
Next year should our paths cross again,
You two as a married couple shall come along,
While I'll be alone in my loneliness.

V

Formerly, my lover you were,
Like water and jug, always there.
Only a little separation,
And another man is here!
Pray, where do I stand now?

VI

I wish to have a woman like you,
Snow-white, bright eyed too,
Healthy, precious like gold.
And, frankly, it may be told -

I want to take you home to my village,
And if you couldn't come within five days,
Surely, before you shall gladly die.

VII

I love you,
I love your clothes so clean,
I love your teeth, silver rimmed,
And your voices, mild and pleasing.

VIII

The wind sweeps through the rice field,
Calmly, leisurely, one washes sand in the waves,

[20 cont.]

539 Little sister thinking of her boy -
In pain;
Big brother thinking of his girl -
Nonchalantly.

IX

After breakfast a cliff we climb,
We throw leaves down the sand-bank,
Fishes are dead, big and small --
Without lover, 'tis never all.

X

The ants climbing a tree do not fear its height,
When you woo a maiden, you fear not another's
might.
In love you should not be afraid of death,
Distant Yunnan is so near if you must measure
your sword.

584 The engagement procedure is rather simple, and no exchange of "eight characters" [indicating the year, month, day and hour of the birth of betrothed persons] or selection of a lucky date is required. After the approval of the parents, the go-
583 between may formally make arrangements, first bringing over
584 the dowry in the form of a "chao-tai" [visiting belt?] to the boy's home. The return gift from the boy's family, which must now be agreed upon, averages from ten to forty dollars in cash. The boy's family further sends through the go-between a flower patterned cloth parasol for deposit in the girl's family ~~and for~~ use by the future bride when she goes to the husband's house at the time of the wedding. On the day of the engagement the boy's family may not provide a feast, but has to despatch three or four young men carrying to the girl's family wine, glutinous rice, chickens and ducks as well as $3.60, known as "niece's cash." (According to the Miao custom a girl should marry a

[114 cont.]

121

habits. The development of the plot of the story, furthermore, will, on the whole, exhibit clearly what is considered right and what wrong. .... Material of this kind does not represent a systematic description of the ethnology of the people, but it has the merit of bringing out those points which are of interest to the people themselves. They present in a way an autobiography of the tribe." (1)

[1. Franz Boas, Tsimshian Mythology, Thirty-first Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1909-1910 (Washington, D.C., 1916), p. 393.]

As to the origin of man, stories vary according to different
121 racial groups. Among these, however, there are points of
171 similarity such as the story of the flood, the rescue of a small
773 number of people favored by the spirits and ghosts, marriages between brothers and sisters, and so on. There are many such stories among the Miao in Kweichow, and in several respects their central theme is rather analogous to that of similar tales among other racial groups elsewhere in the world. The following is an account of some mythological tales among the Hua Miao and the Hê Miao for the reference of ethnologists.

2. The Folklore of the Hua Miao

[115] One day two brothers finished ploughing a field.
539 The next morning they found, to their surprise, that their previous day's work was undone by some people for the field was levelled down as if it had never been ploughed. In their distress and uncertainty they had to plough the field all over again. But the second morning they found that the field was once more levelled. This was repeated four times and they were greatly

[115 cont.]

539 astonished. At last they decided to plough once more, but they concealed themselves that night by the side of the field and kept a secret watch. When midnight came they found an old woman descending from the sky with a wooden plank. She first removed the earth lumps and then with the wooden plank levelled the earth. The elder brother immediately informed the younger one of his wish to kill the old woman, but the younger brother did not consent as he felt she was entitled to a hearing before any action was taken. In the course of cross-examination it was discovered from the old woman that their effort would be futile for soon they would be visited by a flood. She instructed the elder brother that when the flood came he should hide himself in an iron drum, and she also told the younger brother to chop down a tree trunk and to make a hollow inside in the shape of a drum so that he could hide himself there in the event of a flood. Afterwards the flood did come, and the elder brother inside the iron drum was drowned shortly, but the younger brother, who had asked his younger sister to hide with him in the drum-like tree trunk survived the disaster together. The flood, however, was furious and rose as high as the horizons so that the tree trunk was tossed about by the waves, floating here and there. One day it was seen by a fairy who was greatly astonished. This fairy thought that he himself had twelve horns on his head, but the tree trunk had even many more (all the little branches on the trunk were regarded by the fairy as horns), and fearing that the multi-horned monster would do him harm, he ordered the dragon eels, lizards and tadpoles to dig holes in the earth. The holes conducted the water underground and in twenty days the flood completely subsided. The tree trunk floated down with the retreating flood, but unfortunately it landed on a high precipitous cliff and was unable to touch the ground. Soon a mother eagle came to nest on the tree trunk and laid two eggs, which produced two young eagles. Taking advantage of their presence, the brother made plans for escape. He pulled out a lot of his hair and made it into a thread, which he tied on the feathers of the young eagles to prevent them from

[115 cont.]

539 flying. After a considerable time the mother eagle, seeing that her children could not fly, began to get worried [116] and consulted a fairy. The latter asked the eagle to seek the help of the tree trunk, but in recompense the tree trunk had to be lowered to the ground. Thereupon the eagle begged of the tree trunk, and of course the brother inside the trunk could easily grant the request, and he made the disposition of the trunk a condition. When this was agreed upon, he released the wings of the little eagles by removing the hair thread. The little eagles were free to fly out and at the same time the mother eagle removed the trunk to the ground. When the brother and sister stepped out on the level ground, they raised their eyes and found no kinsmen anywhere. There was no fire to keep warm, or rice to satisfy their hunger. Suddenly the brother saw a red robin resting hard by. He picked up a piece of scrap iron and threw it over. The missile missed the bird but hit a rock, scattering sparks all around. Thus they learned the method of making fire. They gathered a heap of dried straw and lit it to keep warm.

There being no other human beings in the world, the brother begged his sister to marry him. The latter refused, whereupon the brother proposed that they both should go up the mountain and from its top each toss a piece of round, smooth millstone down the valley, and if the two stones should roll together they should get married. Thus they undertook the test, and the two stones actually rolled together, but the sister was still unwilling and proposed a second test. The sister took a needle and the brother a piece of thread, both of which were to be thrown into the valley, and if the thread should pierce through the needle hole then the sister would be willing to be married. The result being that the needle was threaded, they became husband and wife. Afterwards they had a son, but it was a monster without arms and legs. They went to consult a fairy, who told them to cut up the monster into a hundred pieces and to scatter them everywhere. The next morning all these pieces of flesh became men and women. They adopted as their names the objects they hit upon, such as Shui (water), Mu (wood) and

[116 cont.]

539 Shih (stone), and from these came the beginning of the hundred names.

Among the Ta Hua Miao [Big Flowery Miao] in Wei-ning there is a somewhat similar kind of myth about the origin of man. According to this story, the day after the recession of the flood two persons, who were brother and sister, went out to examine the situation. They saw a piece of rotton wood in a distant forest. Picking it up, the brother hit it and unexpectedly it yielded fire. The smoke curled skyward and was [117] seen by the God of Thunder, who dispatched a messenger to inquire who was responsible for the fire. The brother and sister told their story. When the messenger went back to make his report, the Thunder God said: "Mankind has already been exterminated, but that these two are not dead must be the will of Heaven." So he ordered them to be married. The brother was reluctant because he felt that marriage between kinsmen was against the law of human relationships, but the Thunder God asked them to consult the Lord of Felicity, who decided that marriage should take place. The brother and sister also went through the same tests of tossing millstones and threading the needle as in the previous story. Among the Ta Hua Miao there is a song of the flood, which may be translated as follows:

The Song of the Flood

In the beginning of things - how exuberant
In an era, peaceful and distant,
Heaven and earth knew no strife
And carefree and abundant was life.
Things were created when cosmos dawned,
Together with a man and his mate.
To them two sons and a girl were born,
The eldest named Yü Huang.
[118]
Chih Lai was the second son,
And a daughter named Yi Ming.

[118 cont.]

●539 Spirits and men had love and peace,
Sharing the sun, which gave life to all.
So said the first man and his wife
To Yü Huang and Chih Lai:
"You two must go to the field,
To till the land with diligence."
And so the two sons went afield,
And soon the waste land was made to yield.
But in the dead of night
The Lord of Felicity sent along
A messenger named Hsien Ming
With a written order and a spirit wand
To Yü Huang and Chih Lai, announcing
"The end of the world in a flood.

[119]

"So why should your toil be continued?"
But Yü Huang and Chih Lai heeded not,
And field work still the two pursued -
The words of God were soon forgot.
The Lord of Felicity waxed furious,
And dispatched Hsien Ming once again
With magic wand on mission curious
At night as the moon began to wane.
The field was hardened as if unploughed,
And weeds and rushes grew lush.
At night the brothers quietly waited
At yonder fields the prowler to catch.
They found Hsien Ming, the messenger.
"Let's condemn the man to death," said Yü Huang.

[120]

"No, let us ask him why," was Chih Lai's reply.
And Hsien Ming, nodding, said: "Aye, aye,
"When thirteen strikes, the cycle ends,
The darkened sky will be overcast,
In angry waves the flood descends
To wipe away the earth at last."
But Yü Huang and Chih Lai gave no credence,

[120 cont.]

539

As day followed night, and night followed day
In uninterrupted sequence, and time it was
For the thirteen hour here to stay.
And lo! soon came the raging flood
To bear out the words of the Lord of Felicity.
Yü Huang, who had a heart cruel and wicked,
Was given an iron boat by the god.
To Chih Lai with a merciful heart
[121]
The Lord gave a pinewood boat:
The iron boat sank with the load,
But the pine boat was found afloat.
Chih Lai and his sister were the only survivors;
Even birds and beasts were all drowned,
Except some white eggs in the pine boat,
Which in the armpit they hatched.
In the boat were hatched out some little chicks.
There was no life on the boundless sea:
No fowls or dogs, birds or beasts.
All sounds were hushed except the voice
Of Chih Lai and Yi Ming talking to each other,
And the chicks making a slight noise,
For in the world all life had perished.
So Chih Lai had no other way but to ask
[122]
Hsien Ming, Messenger of the Lord of Felicity:
"Now that mankind is destroyed,
Except the two of us, brother and sister,
What shall we do to live?"
"As mankind has been wiped out from the world,
So you too, brother and sister, should unite
In wedlock, to be the progenitors of mankind."
"But how can there be marriage between us brother
and sister?
The words of the Lord of Felicity we dare not follow."
"If hesitant you still are,
Why not divine your Destiny by rolling down

[122 cont.]

539

Two halves of a millstone from east and west of the river?"
And, so brother and sister hurried back
To the boat and there rolled down the bank the millstone.
And who would imagine that the two halves were united

[123]

Not only once but as many as four times!
Then brother and sister no longer hesitated,
But husband and wife they became.
Looking back at the shore, Chih Lai saw
A pheasant stand there on yonder rock,
And picking up a piece of iron, he aimed at it.
Who would imagine that the iron hit the rock
And there from the crevice sparks came forth.
The sparks burnt the grass on the rock
As flames and smoke curled up to the skies.
Now brother and sister had fire to cook their food.
All on earth was once again in a peaceful mood,
And the universe returned to its primeval calm and ease.
The myriad things thrived; men and spirits lived in peace.
The flood was gone and the world in harmony.
Brother and sister loved each other tenderly;
From their wedlock sons and daughters sprang.
The eldest son was Chao Yung,
The second son Chao Yang;
And the third son Chao Yao.
For myriads of generations the people in the world
Were their descendants all.

[114] (This song was translated [into Chinese] by Mr. Yang Han-hsien and published in Kweichow jih-pao [Kweichow Times], "The Social Studies Supplement," No. 9, edited by the Social Science Research Institute of the Ta-hsia University.)

[123 cont.]

539

3. The Folklore of the Hê Miao at Pa-chai

It was said that at the very beginning there were nine eggs in a certain mountain cave. (It was not known whence the eggs came.) After having been hatched by "Mother Sun," eight sons were born, the eldest was Thunder, the other seven being Dragon, Snake, Tiger, Nine-headed Monster, Python, Wolf and Monkey. The last one who came out said that the ninth refused to follow him. The mother thought it was a spoiled egg and she was about to crush it when she heard a voice inside saying: "Mother, do not crush me. I am coming out in three days. My name is Lao Yen. When I come out I should be the eldest brother." The mother complied and hugged the egg for three more days when at last a boy was born. This son was the cleverest of all and immediately was able to talk. It was said that he was closely related to mankind.

[125] After the birth of the ninth son there was no harmony among the brothers. Lao Yen, who acted most strangely, always made fun of his brothers. The mother had already decided to send the eldest son Thunder to heaven to administer the skies. The youngest son, Lao Yen, was displeased and at the same time harbored evil intentions to harm the other seven brothers. One day he invited them to an outing on the mountain, but had previously laid down a plan to trap them. When all the others had climbed up the mountain he set fire to the foot of the mountain on all sides. But the brothers discovered the plot in time and fled home. When the mother knew that the youngest son was full of intrigues, she summoned all the eight brothers together and said to them: "Since you are close together like the four limbs, you should not plot against each other. Lao Yen is the youngest, but also the cleverest. So all the affairs on earth should be administered by him, and the rest of you should obey him. ...." Thus Lao Yen, being commissioned by the mother, began to administer all earthly affairs, but he was by nature lazy and did not attend to agriculture. When

[125 cont.]

539 Thunder looked down from heaven he saw the land was overgrown with weeds, and he reprimanded Lao Yen, saying: "Being head of the earth, why don't you begin cultivation?" Lao Yen replied: "I have no cow." Thereupon Thunder sent down a cow. Lao Yen slaughtered the cow and ate it. He stuck the tail outside a stone cave. When Thunder came down to earth to investigate, he found the field still barren. Furious, Thunder asked: "Where is the cow?" Lao Yen had evil intentions to harm Thunder and a thought suddenly flashed across his mind.

He said to Thunder: "The cow has been locked up in the cave. I go inside to push and you stay outside to pull the tail. What do you say?"

Thunder did not doubt his intention. Actually Lao Yen also tugged at the tail from inside the cave, and when he saw Thunder was pulling with all his might, he let go of the tail and Thunder went rolling down the hill. Lao Yen thought he had killed his brother, but actually Thunder hit a pile of straw and was unhurt. When Thunder went back to heaven he planned for vengeance. Later Lao Yen also knew that Thunder was still at large and became more cautious, but he still made evil plans.

One day Thunder arrived, gathering storm and rain, and flung an axe in the direction of Lao Yen. It missed its target, but in the movement Thunder lost his equilibrium and fell down to earth and was caught by Lao Yen, who put the captive in an iron cage. Lao Yen planned to select a lucky day to kill Thunder. Each time Lao Yen left the house he took care to warn the neighbors not to give water to Thunder, because with water [126] Thunder would become mighty again. One day after Lao Yen had left, a neighbor's two children (brother and sister) came around the house. Thunder begged them to give him some water. The two, fearing Lao Yen, did not dare to accede to the request, but were finally persuaded by Thunder to bring over some water.

With water in his possession Thunder said to the children: "Lao Yen is a wicked person. I want to drown him in a big flood. You two go quickly to plant some gourds, which will soon flower and bear fruit. Be sure to choose the biggest and

[126 cont.]

539 the most solid one and dig out the seeds. When flood comes you can sit in the gourd to save your lives."

After so saying, Thunder jumped out of the iron cage and went away. The brother and sister did what they were told. Shortly, the flood actually came, drowning everything on earth, except the brother and sister who were saved in the gourd. Afterwards the two married, producing offspring who are the people of the world today.

4. The Folklore of the Short-skirt Hê Miao

Among the Short-skirt Hê Miao at Lu-shan, Ma-chiang, Tan-chiang and Pa-chai there is also a story of the flood and the marriage between brother and sister. In some respects, its content is rather different from that of the previous story. According to their folklore when heaven and earth were first created there were a couple, the man named Kao-chia-liang (Miao pronunciation) and the woman, Hu-chia-hsiu. They had a son and a daughter, the son named Pan-yang and the daughter, Ch'ê-yang. When Ch'ê-yang grew up she became a beautiful woman, whom Kao-chia-liang secretly married. When Hu-chia-hsiu knew of the affair she gave her husband no peace all day long, with the result that they divided the property and the woman drove her husband away from home. Three years elapsed, but Hu-chia-hsiu could not live like a widow and went away in search of Kao-chia-liang. At this time Hu-chia-hsiu became pregnant and laid by the roadside twelve stone eggs, eleven of which broke open on touching the ground. Each broken egg produced [127] a male adult. But the last stone egg did not break on touching the ground, and instead a human voice inside said that after three days he was to come out to join the rest. Three days later an adult male actually emerged. The twelve persons called each other brothers, but the youngest was the cleverest of all and envied by the rest. To acquire the property

[127 cont.]

539 of the parents they were engaged in constant fights. One day the twelve brothers drank together, but the youngest brother filled his gourd with cold water and poured real wine into his brothers' cups. When they were drunk and fast asleep, he lit a pile of straw and pushed his brothers into the fire to be burned alive. After death one brother became Thunder and ascended into the sky; one became a dragon and descended into the water; one became a snake and crept into a hole; one became a tiger and hid himself deep in the woods; one became a weasel and climbed up a hill; the other six all became animals and went away in search of food. When Thunder reached heaven he thought of revenge by sending down a disastrous flood to drown his wicked brother. But the youngest brother managed to reach heaven in time and did not return to earth until after the flood had subsided. One day he met a beautiful young woman, who was his younger sister born afterwards by his mother. They married each other and soon gave birth to an eyeless and noseless monster shaped like a melon. They killed the monster, cut it into twelve pieces and abandoned them on the ground. Unexpectedly each piece of flesh became the ancestor of a Miao tribe, and the last piece was the forefather of the Short-skirt Hê Miao today.

5. Conclusion

773 171 The myths regarding the origin of man are generally alike in substance among the Hê Miao at Pa-chai, the Hua Miao and the Short-skirt Hê Miao. [128] A few points worthy of note are: first, the stories are not related to man's first ancestors after the creation, but to the resuscitation of mankind after the flood. They are not the stories of Adam and Eve but those of Noah. The story of the flood is found in the myths of all these primitive peoples. The Miao are supposed to have originally migrated from Hunan and Kiangsi, and the flood referred to in their myths was probably the legendary flood during the time

[135 cont.]

627 After a decision is rendered in this fashion both parties would
773 show compliance and would not carry the case to the law courts. Although the mythology handed down from mouth to mouth does not have religious contents, it becomes a kind of prophecy to those people who hold everything pertaining to their ancestors in the highest respect. It is entirely due to this inherent respect for their ancestors that the ancestral myth is recounted before carrying out the punishment or at the time of settling a dispute. The idea is to employ the will of the ancestors to restrain the actions of their descendants. It is interesting to note that the mythology of the Sheng Miao, meant originally to inform posterity of the stories of their ancestors' life, has also assumed the corrective and preventive functions of law.

773 [136] The ancestral myth recorded by this writer consists
538 of three versions, which are scattered over every corner of the Sheng Miao area. Although these versions show some variance, they have the same origin. The original mythology of all ethnic groups is told in verses or songs so that they can be remembered easily by posterity. The first two versions of the ancestral myth are told by the Sheng Miao as prose stories due to the disappearance of the poetical versions in the course of time. The third version is a song sung by the Sheng Miao, and few indeed are those elders in the whole area who can sing the song in its entirety. It therefore still retains all its simple primitive character. The whole song has 488 lines and represents the pure myth of the Sheng Miao regarding the origin of man. The three versions are given as follows.

The First Version

539 There was an old woman who descended from heaven to the earth with a melon seed. She planted this seed on the top of a mountain range. After three days the seed sprouted and the vine extended to more than two feet. After seven days the melon plant covered the whole mountain, yielding many large melons. Among the melons there was the melon king so large that it could accommodate several dozen persons inside. It

[136 cont.]

539 happened that at the time a torrential rain inundated the whole world and drowned all mankind except a brother and sister - their names are not known - who hid themselves in the great melon. The melon floated hither and thither until - we do not know how - it reached heaven. The people in heaven asked the brother and sister to come down to earth and permitted them to become husband and wife. They came down and married but could not find any food to eat. Thereupon they began to eat the melon. At that time they met the old woman, who was the planter of the melon seed. She said to them: "Eating the melon will give you children." Indeed after a while a son was born. But the parents were unhappy with the melon child, and cutting him with a knife into a number of pieces, they scattered them at the foot of a nearby mountain. Afterwards the bones of the melon child became the Miao, the liver became the Sui-chia, and the neck became the T'ung-chia. In addition there were two other pieces, one of which became the [137] Miao king and the other the Han [Chinese] king. The Miao king was named Lao Tung, and the Han king, Lao Li. Lao Tung lived on the highland which included the present Li-p'ing, Yung-ts'ung and Hsia-chiang. Lao Li went down along the river as far as Kwangtung where he settled. His influence extended over a very large area and he became exceedingly prosperous. He asked Lao Tung to join him in Kwangtung, but because the two struggled for the possession of a salt well Lao Li killed Lao Tung. When Lao Tung went to Kwangtung he brought with him two sons, one called Lao Ting and the other Lao Ch'un. After the death of their father they went back to the highlands and settled along the Tzu-wen River (about 10 li from Hsia-chiang) to cultivate the land, and became more and more prosperous. They decided to avenge their father's death and always went down to molest and rob Lao Fu, Lao Li's son. Lao Fu could not stand it any longer and together with Lao Li he went to discuss with them a permanent settlement of their territory. The method for demarcation was to invoke the will of heaven through divination. They agreed to settle down in any place where luck would have them. Being cunning and shrewd, Lao Li and his son Lao Fu had

[137 cont.]

539 previously laid down a plan, according to which one was to hide underneath a big bridge and the other to hold a banner in a mountain cave. They then agreed that they should yell to heaven and see to whom heaven would respond. The favored party would have the first choice. Lao Ting yelled first but there was no response. Then Lao Li yelled. When he yelled at heaven, heaven responded; when he yelled at the earth, the earth echoed. Thus Lao Ting and his brother were again robbed of the fruits of their labor by the father and his son. Being unable to remain at the Tzu-wen River they had to withdraw to the deep mountains (the area occupied by the Sheng Miao today). The Miao along the river then came into contact with Lao Li and his son. Lao Fu further cultivated good relations with the Yao, but became enemies of the T'ung-chia and Sui-chia. Later, on account of repeated disputes they opened a mass meeting at Tu-shan and Li-po, where they decided to have bull fights, liu-sheng playing, song-singing, and huan-ku-chang [lit., the settlement of old debts] as recreations of the Miao and Yao, and opera singing and the New Year festivities as recreations of the Han [Chinese]. After the meeting the pen used was given to the Chinese and the left-over chicken feet were given to the Miao. Thus the descendants of the Chinese learned to read and write and became officials because their ancestors received the pen. The descendants of the Miao became farmers because their ancestors got the chicken feet. The sons of Lao Ting and Lao Fu were Lao Lüeh and Lao Kao. The events after this are not clear.

[138] The Second Version

In ancient times there were a couple who had six children. The eldest son was called En [blessing]; the second, Liu [thunder]; the third, Hu [tiger]; the fourth, Lung [dragon]; the fifth, Shê [snake]; and the sixth, Mei [fascination]. Soon the father died. The children lived apart according to their responsibilities. En looked after the earth; Lui, the heaven; Hu, the mountain; Lung, the forest; Shê, the cave; sister Mei

[138 cont.]

539 and the old mother lived together with En. Wishing to cultivate the field, En went to heaven to borrow a cow from Lui and promised to return the animal the following year. But after the field was cultivated there was nothing to eat. Therefore, En slaughtered the cow and fed the family. He stuck the tail and the head of the cow in the crevices of a rock outside his house. When Lui asked En for the cow the latter replied, "The rock outside has eaten up the cow." Lui scolded the rock for having eaten the cow, but the rock replied, "En has eaten it, and if you do not believe me, go to his house and search in the wooden tub -- there is still some beef left." Lui became angry and threw down a javelin from the sky to hit En. En was aware of this and had on his back the bark of an old tree. While throwing the javelin Lui was careless and slipped. He fell down to earth and was caught by En, who purposely asked, "Do you prefer to be locked up in a big drum or in an iron store room?" Lui knew that En had a wicked heart and used to beat the drum with a wooden club, and therefore he asked to be locked up in the store room. So Lui was locked up in an iron store room. At the same time En asked Lui to make a red rope, saying that when the whole room was filled with the rope he would be set free. En dug a hole into the store room and drew out the rope from time to time. Lui did not know this trick. After six years of work he still could not fill the room with rope. He could only heave sighs. One day an old man who was looking for manure, passed by. Lui yelled to the man and asked him whether he had seen his javelin. The old man told him that the javelin was tossed by En to the manure pit. Lui begged the old man to retrieve it and clean it for him. When Lui got the javelin he was so happy that he kept on playing with it, yielding flashes of light. The old man outside was stunned. Lui thanked him for his trouble and wished him to be the richest man on earth. With the javelin Lui was able to break open the iron store house and ascended to heaven. At that time En was drawing out the rope to T'ai-nan (ancient Miao locality). When he came back [139] he did not find Lui and became greatly alarmed for he knew Lui would not

[139 cont.]

539 stop there. Lui's hatred for En was very deep and he planned to kill him. He therefore gathered all his magic power and brought about a great flood. Soon the whole world was inundated. En escorted his mother and sister to a stone cave for refuge. He cut for himself a big tree and collected a cluster of bees in a gourd. The flood reached the sky, and En's boat floated down the gateway of Lui's house, just as the latter was rejoicing over the drowning of his enemy. When he heard the sound outside his gate he opened it and was greatly astonished to find En in his boat. En said that the flood could not drown him, but the gourd when heated over the fire would be able to kill him. Lui foolishly believed in his words, and taking the gourd he put it over the fire. The bees in the gourd could not stand the heat and all came out to sting. Lui and all his family were stung, suffering great pains. En said, "For medicine you have to go down to earth." Lui therefore called back the flood and followed En to the earth. En picked up a few frog leaves [?].

"These leaves are neither rare nor strange. In heaven we have them in great abundance," Lui said.

"If I do not lead you down to earth, you would not call back the water," replied En.

Lui recognized En's ability, and the two brothers made peace with each other, promising never to be enemies again. They divided the heaven and earth as their respective spheres of control. At that time the earth, being washed over by the flood, could provide nothing that could be eaten as food, except a grain of rice offered to En by a rat hiding in a hole. En planted the seed and obtained food. Then he thought of a wife and went to ask a little insect.

"Is there any woman left in the world to become my wife?"

The insect replied, "There are only you and your sister, but you two can marry. Let one of you go up the hill and the other go down the hill, each under a parasol. When you meet midway on the hill you two will be like distant cousins coming from two distant places."

The brother and sister actually became husband and wife. After two years they suddenly gave birth to a child without four

[139 cont.]
539 limbs in the shape of a melon. En was furious and cut up his monster child with a big knife into a number of pieces and threw them around on the top of a mountain. The second day when En climbed up the mountain he found that the pieces of flesh had become a number of men and women. Then En set fire to the bamboo, which crackled and exploded. [140] This fire provoked laughter from the men and women on the mountain, who soon uttered sounds and talked in three different languages, the Chinese, the Tung and the Miao.

The Third Version

[128]

[Editor's note: The following is a free translation of the original song. In the latter part, a number of verses, mostly repetitious, have been omitted.]

In very ancient times,
Our story must begin,
When men had to build houses
And burn the field for cultivation.

Cutting the trees required
Two days going up the slope,
And one day going downward, -
Spared only was a big tree.

A tumor grew from the tree;
On its branches the birds nested.
No one dared to chop it:
A goat was asked to divine.

The goat said: "Go ahead."
With a hatchet hacking both ways.
And two knives at the same time,
They chopped for two days.

[140 cont.]

●539

They hacked a long while
Then a wind suddenly came.
Down the tree went crashed,
But the trunk was saved.

The top of the tree fell,
To the ditch side;
The top went rotting out,
But below, the tree continued to grow.

A nest was underneath;
Two birds were nigh;
Two insects crawled by,
Making a feeble flap.

When the insects flew down
They were larger than the birds;
The two were same in size,
But two different insects.

They flew to the nest
And five eggs they laid:
White and round and large.
Who was there to hatch?

A little bird came
To ask the right to hatch:
Which egg to hatch first?
For twelve months she brooded.

The little bird chirped,
And looked closely around:
How tiny was her little self,
And food had yet be found.

Hungry and starving,
The bird flew away

[140 cont.]

539

In search of fruits and flowers,
When an eagle she met.

The eagle, wishing to hatch
The eggs, came to inquire.
After eleven months
She cried a few times.

The eagle also felt
She was a bit too small;
Sitting without food,
No longer would she hatch.

And to the flew away
In search of chicks.
Who else next would stay
These little eggs to brood?

Who was the father of the eggs?
Let him come to hatch
These five eggs large and white,
An inscrutable batch.

One egg bore a Dragon in the river
And the Dragon produced a fish;
One egg became Thunder in the sky,
And one En and Mei, who on earth remained.

One egg produced a Tiger,
Another, a Snake,
And they all came to share
The father's wealth on the mountain top.

The land was equally divided
Save a big hilly farm
With seven waterfalls from the cave
Coveted by En and Thunder.

[140 cont.]

539

En and Thunder disagreed
For their share of this land:
In spite of kinship blood
Thunder sent down flood.

En's father was very old,
High-nosed and quite frail;
He sat on a wooden bench,
Eating with chopsticks.

The land was re-apportioned:
Nine thousand ch'ih [a measurement for land]
Thunder took;
The remaining seventy thousand ch'ih
Were still on the bank.

Dragon received the land
Along the river banks:
[141] En had nothing left to take,
And so with a sword he went to cultivate.

To Li-t'ang he soon went
Cucumbers to grow:
The second moon quickly faded,
And fifth moon came in a row.

The cucumbers growing ripe
Were seen by the monkeys wild,
Who removed the bridge
To an alien land.

En's mother had a fall,
And down a deep precipice she rolled:
In the throes of life or death
She had hardly a breath.

For her who was still alive
They each kept watch overnight:

[141 cont.]

539

Who was the lucky fellow
A new field to possess?

One hundred ninety thousand
Mow was the size of the land:
The bin was full of harvest grain:
For the sons to put up claims.

Thunder was the oldest son
And came to turn the field:
After a whole night's vigil,
Mother was still alive.

She still could take rice;
She still could spin yarn;
Charcoal she still could burn:
But who was the second son?

Dragon was the second son:
So he was called from the river edge
To carry home more fuel;
And firewood was cut on the ledge.

Firewood was taken from the river bank,
And Dragon came to spend the night
When Mother was still up,
Eating rice and doing fine.

Mother could still spin
And weave, and charcoal make:
En was called to come back
With firewood, which he cut on the slope.

A night's vigil En did keep,
But Mother did not die:
He watched until early morn
When the cock began to crow.

[141 cont.]

539

The spacious field En aspired,
The spacious field to till:
With both hands on her neck,
He contrived his aged mother to strangle,
To send her to death
With all his strength.

The spacious field En aspired,
The spacious field to till:
A pestilence was found
To mean Mother's body,
The trench was all around
And she had to be buried.

The coffin was made of iron
And steel too was used;
In heaven her burial should take place
When the coffin lid was sealed.

Dragon too wanted
To have her entombed
In a stone coffin
By the river bank.

But there was sister Mei,
Who made Mother's clothes.
On earth she wished Mother to be,
Where she could be within reach.

Oh, our poor Mother!
Don't believe in Thunder,
Dragon was unkind,
Mei only was to be trusted.

Trees had to be felled
And rice seedlings planted;
The foliage cast its shade
And the trees had to be cut.

[141 cont.]

539 Four planks of pinewood
Were all that the coffin had,
To be carried to the village
And there safely buried.

Once more the field became
A subject of contention:
Who was to lay claim on the field
That yielded nine tins of grain.

Who was the elder brother?
Who was the first to decide?
If worse should come to the worst,
All the brothers should abide.

And so Thunder made his claim,
But the brothers railed:
When Thunder went up to heaven,
It rained, it thundered, it hailed.

En came forth to say:
"This field brings ill luck;
Second brother, Dragon, may
In turn make his claim."

Dragon could not make up his mind,
And so to the river he rushed,
[142] Breaking the embankment --
And all about was laid waste.

En came forth to say:
"This field brings ill luck."
He wished sister Mei
Would at last save the day.

And so the sister said:
"Two months have passed,
All the grass is dead --
Let the cat go down the ditch to have a look."

[142 cont.]

539

For this a light was lit
To show the cat around:
En was at last asked
To take a final look.

En with another fire
Was ready to proceed;
But the cat turned around
To report to Thunder.

Snake too was asked,
But En knew it all;
Lighting a straw torch,
He set fire in his wake.

The fire soon spread everywhere,
And the country was a waste.
The cat ran for dear life,
And snake as well made haste,

While Dragon plunged deep into the water,
But Thunder alone was not afraid;
He sat down, waiting.
For the fire him to overtake.

The fire was fast approaching,
Destroying, devastating;
When the heat grew too strong,
Thunder skyward dashed along.

High up in the sky
Rain water was kept,
While to earth it was denied;
So the field was parched.

The earth was all cracked
And walking was a pain;

[142 cont.]

539

And water Thunder held,
Up in the sky.

Without water the field
Refused to yield:
En decided to ascend to heaven
To Thunder to plead.

It was in the ninth month
When rain was released,
The field was eased;
And the fish swam about.

But En was so selfish;
He ate all the fish:
When Thunder came down,
All the fish were gone.

Thunder was really angry now:
When to heaven he went back
He took with him the only cow
That tilled the field.

Without the cow En was forlorn:
And he took a dog to help him;
The dog kept barking all the day
Without doing work in the field.

Thunder, looking down from heaven,
Could not resist laughter:
En once more was high and dry --
A good lesson for hereafter.

And so once more En implored
Forgiveness and his cow.
Thunder gave him the cow
To work on the earth.

[142 cont.]

539

After the field was ploughed,
En killed the cow for food
Just as Thunder was coming down to earth
To drive the cow to its heavenly home.

That cow deserved death,
So En told Thunder;
It went grazing on a cliff,
Fell down, and was devoured by the cliff.

Now En thought of Thunder's wife,
And up to heaven he went.
But she loved En not,
For Thunder only she desired.

When Thunder returned home,
In anger he roared:
Wicked was En to have robbed my field,
Seized my cow and coveted my wife.

Thunder vowed vengeance: for these wrongs
En had to pay with his life.
Thunder was to let loose a terrific flood,
Overflowing heaven and earth.

En had built a small house,
But Thunder had kicked it to pieces.
Another hut En had built
And again it had been destroyed.

So En went to ask Mother Goose;
She urged En to build a bamboo hut
To be thatched with palm leaves
And covered with green moss.

[142 cont.]

539

Next time when Thunder kicked,
He slipped in an awful fall.
Once more Thunder was entrapped,
And in an iron bin he was laid.

En went out to a far land
To seek as much silver
As he could get to buy salt
With which to pickle Thunder.

Alone in the house was Mei,
Making soup to wash her hair.
She left the soup by the bin,
And when Thunder had it,
His strength he soon regained;
Once more the earth he shook.

Ascending his heavenly domain,
He gave Mei a little seed.
The seed sprouted and grew
Into a melon as big as a bin.

To punish En, Thunder struck
With rain and storm and hail:
Men sought shelter, trying to duck
The rage of Thunder without avail.

The hailstones were like water pails;
Some as big as wooden tables.
Down they fell in endless streams,
Playing havoc on men and houses.

Old men were killed in their beds;
Eighty thousand people were drowned.
The water reached heaven,
Flooding everyone except En.

[143 cont.]

539

En gathered three pumpkins:
Inside one he hid himself;
The other two were for his dog and the bees.
With these he sailed up to heaven.

When En arrived at Thunder's gate,
A challenge he sent:
"If these melons you can break,
A conqueror you would be."

When the melons were opened,
A host of bees hidden there
Came swarming helter-skelter,
And Thunder's wife was stung.

A small insect triedto make peace,
And told Thunder that the flood had to cease:
[144] When En returned to the earth,
Thunder and lightning were all around.

When the earth was by lightning struck,
Mountain ridges all grew up;
But all the world was a barren waste,
Save an eagle flying in haste.

En stopped the eagle and asked:
"Is there somewhere a woman left?"
"The feud of you brothers has made a mess,
And woman there's none, I confess."

And so En inquired of an old dame,
Who said Mei and En should married be:
With the world bereft of human beings,
Brother and sister were to be united.

[144 cont.]

539

From this wedlock came a son,
Without eyes and without ears, --
No more, no less, like a melon he looked --
And the parents were all in tears.

En cut the monster into lumps,
And tossed them around high and low,
They became the Sui-chia and the Chuang,
And the Nine Tribes.

All the people in the world
Were originally unable to speak;
They knew not how to eat rice
Or to enjoy the joys of sex.

En boiled some beans to eat as rice,
And soon he broke wind.
The Han [Chinese] cried "ch'ih-fan";
The Tung, "chi-kou";

The Miao, "no-nüeh";
All meaning "eating rice."
After this the Han, Miao, and Tung,
They all had speech.

3. Conclusions

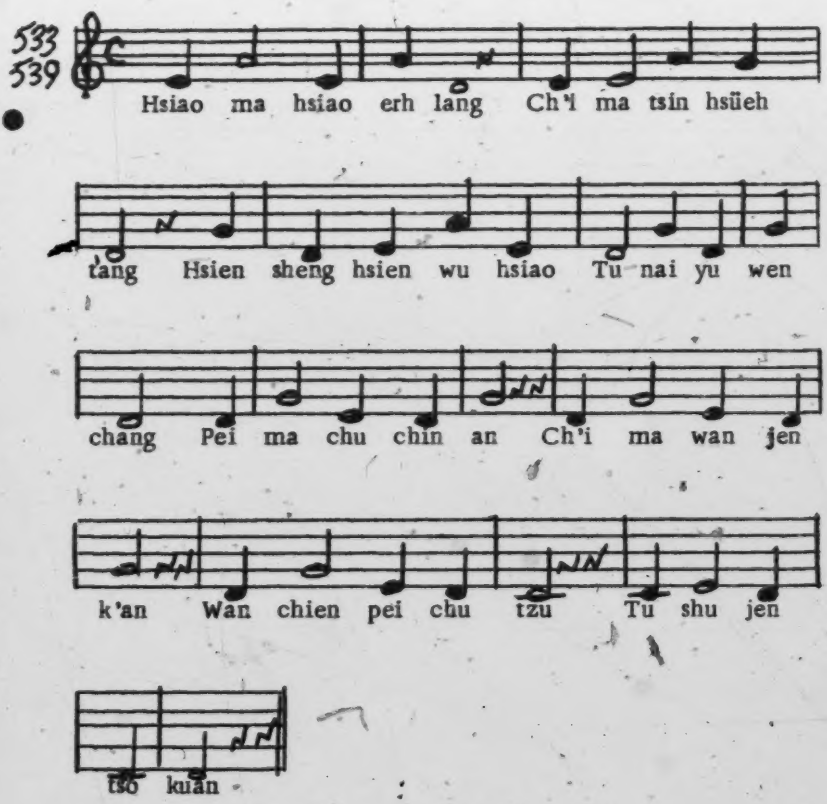
773 Based on these three versions of the Miao myth, the following points deserve attention.

1. It is without doubt that though superficially the three versions seem different, they actually originate from the same story, altered here and there by later story-tellers. The common theme of these versions is: "Once in ancient times there was a flood, which destroyed all mankind except a brother and sister, who escaped from the disaster. After the flood had subsided, brother and sister were forced to marry each other. They bore a son who looked like a melon. In anger the father cut it into

12: Wu and Ch'en--119 E-5 (1939-41) 1942 AE5 Miao AE5

[200 cont.]

No. 1



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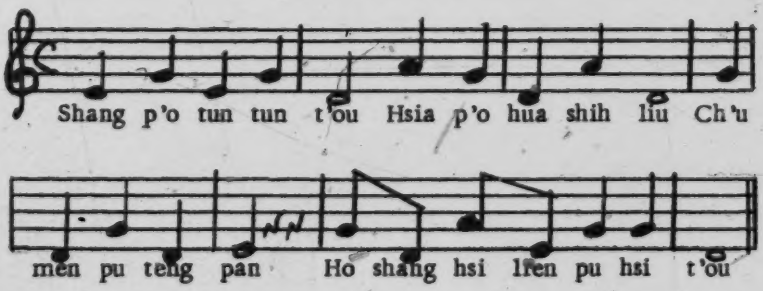

[201 cont.]

No. 1

539

On a little pony a little boy
Has gone riding to school:
The teacher thinks that I'm too small,
But my stomach flows with learning.

On a white horse with a golden saddle,
I ride as I watch people.
I see the white pillars
Where a student has become official.

No. 2

Up the slope the rider nods his head;
Down the slope there are slippery pebbles,
Going outdoors without a mate,
The monk washes his face but not his head.

534 (b) The wu-sheng. The five-tube bamboo wind instrument is almost constructed similarly to the six-tube instrument, except it has five holes instead of six and that its shape is slightly flatter. This instrument is played by young men with licentious tunes to seduce young women, and generally accompanied by dancing.

(c) The k'ou-ch'in. The mouth organ is a woman's musical instrument among the Hua Miao. It is made of two pieces of brass plates each three inches long, with a crevice hollowed out in the center in the form of a tongue-shaped awl. It is played against the lips by blowing out and sucking in air, the thumb plucking lightly at the end of the brass plate with each breath. The pitch and quantity of the notes are regulated by the mouth. The little tunes from this instrument are very pleasant to hear.

(d) The hsiao-ti. The flutes and fifes are made by the Miao themselves from bamboo tubes of varying lengths and

[202 cont.]

No. 1

539

The field is large and the earth is raw;
To plough it fills me with fright and awe:
I dig, I rake, I shovel and I pound —
Useless, save a maiden wife is found.

[203]

No. 2

The weeds by the roadside yield white flowers;
Homeless, I seek other people's bowers:
When fuel is gathered, rice is cold —
My tears and woes are manifold.

No. 3

On the mu-i I sadly mourn, [mu-i - music instrument]
And play the music until dawn:
When girls hear the woeful strain,
From copious tears they can't refrain.

No. 4

Here and there the father cries,
All at home the mother sighs:
Whither have all the children gone?
In the woods they sing a song.

No. 5

Thinly the rain falls dripping,
Ruefully comes an orphaned stripling:
How much cold rice has he eaten?
How many a time is he beaten?

No. 6

Tobacco crop is bad this year;
My star and luck are sad I fear:
Every tiny flow'r I pluck
Bears no leaf and has no luck.

[203 cont.]

No. 7

539

The seventh day of seventh moon
Is pheasant hunting season soon:
The pheasant flies across the pass,
My girl and I are alone at last.

No. 8

The gold tipped chopstick falls
Where the pretty maiden calls:
I purposely toss it around
So that my maiden can be found.

No. 9

This road to Kweichow, winding and long;
Vehicles run all night till dawn:
Reaching homestead with a pang
Of joy, for soon it is Kweiyang.

No. 10

Birds in heaven fly in pairs;
The man in clouds assumes stupid airs —
Hey, you fool!
There's none prettier than she who's there.

(b) The songs of the Ching-miao. (Free translation from
[114] the Miao language into Chinese, but faithful translation from
the Chinese into English.)

Ordinary Love Songs (Serenades for Kan-piao)

No. 1

The moon rises in the gloaming,
With our lovers we go roaming;

[203 cont.]

539

But when the moon suspends on high,
We settle down for a lovers' sigh.

No. 2

Many buttons adorn my gown;
I have brother, you have wife:
If you agree, my brother you own,
But give her to me for all my life.

No. 3

Peaches half red are in June;
I love maidens with a blush,
Lilting, bending to my tune,
Rosy faces all a-flush.

No. 4

Outside your door grows an ash,
Bending, swinging with the wind:
Fair maid, do not feel abash;
Without your beck'ning, I'm not the kind.

[204] No. 5

The girls carry water a long while,
But the tank is empty yet;
They traversed many a tedious mile
Only their lovers to beget.

No. 6 (Male voice)

Fell a bamboo in the grove,
And a fishing line I throw;
But not a single catch I prove,
Save a Chengtu maid in tow.

[204 cont.]

(Female voice)

539

The stars emerge upon the stars;
Two stars entwine in one part;
Gold hook upon the silver hook;
Your heart clinging on my heart.

No. 7 (Male voice)

Do not worry, do not weep;
Wrinkles show on your forehead:
If my words you loyally keep,
Many good days are far ahead.

(Female voice)

Do not worry, do not weep;
At my hip a banjo slings
To drown our songs and voices deep,
But pluck not my heartstrings.

No. 8 (Male voice)

The grass is leveled and rain descends;
The field is ready for planting:
Come and tell me what transcends
My love for you to land in.

(Female voice)

The rain falls on a simple rogue,
Leveling the grass, readying the field;
What confidences I him owe
To his droll flirtations yield?

[204 cont.]

539

Planting Songs (sung in the field)

No. 1

The planting maids are busy planting:
Who has the time to come ranting,
Chasing after the maiden fair?
No, not till the harvest is there.

[205]

No. 2

The unplanted seeds must be kept:
No one has any free time left
To bother with man or sister —
Not even to attend to a blister.

No. 3

The rice is planted in serried ranks,
And water flows in from buried tanks:
Who is singing two rows down?
Where's your sister? You only frown.

No. 4

The plants must be placed with care,
Ridding the stalk and leaving it bare:
Our legs are soaked in watery mud;
Hardly we hear any sounding thud.

No. 5

Down the terrace are other fields:
The painted face a servant shields;
The eel in mud is still an eel,
Which salt makes tasteful a great deal.

[205 cont.]

No. 6

539

The high mountain is so near yonder;
To the deep water there we wander;
On the bridge the maid eats meal,
But in the cow shed our love will seal.

Wine Song (Sung at feast)

Here's some gift to relation sent;
To receive it a fair cousin smiles:
For us a table and benches set,
And the host runs home many miles.

A crowded table is not our worry;
Your wine is what we fear:
For to eat and drink and all a-flurry,
To be intoxicated here.

[114] (c) The Songs of the Chung-chia. (Free translation from the Miao language, but faithful translation from the Chinese.)

No. 1

The pouch is chiselled on two sides;
We share the road from different homes:
To talk to you - my yearning urge,
But fear some one's vengeance surge.

No. 2

Three scarves hidden by a screen;
A maid has her good husband seen:
Others move on silently,
Bending, tearful, mournfully.

[205 cont.]

No. 3

539

A large lot of land without border —
Grass grows amuck, good for fodder:
This is what we mortals are
In this world without a lucky star.

No. 4

A long time I've not this roadway passed;
Moss and lichens cover it fast.
'Neath the lichens a trickle flows;
Here we drink to end our woes.

No. 5

Yonger maid, astride the fence,
In her hand a basket carries:
Why she stops, there and thence,
Why she stops and waits and tarries?

No. 6

In life and death she follows me
To the court of the magistrate:
Thirty thrashings tenderly;
Leave me alone — that is straight.

[206] No. 7

When sun descends the slope is dark;
When a cloth is dipped in dye;
When a maid forsakes me in the park —
All linger on, the cloth and I.

[206 cont.]

No. 8

539

The groom is seventeen and the bride,
A maid of eighteen summers fair;
The duck is killed and the chicken fried
To honor the everlasting pair.

No. 9

But if for reasons they must sever,
Tear drops flow down in pain lest
The Judge refuse to let as ever
Him go east and her go west.

No. 10

At the market yester morn
Many items were displayed;
I searched for you here and yon;
At last returned, quite dismayed.

[152 cont.]

538 lot is otherwise so hard. Below are given two extracts from "Méo" songs, borrowed from the work of P. Marabail (op. cit., pp. 296 and 298):

539 832 1. Love song:

The Young Man. — One is born only once. As the bee and the butterfly go far off in search of flowers, so human creatures are obliged to make long journeys to seek out those beings with whom they should unite. In like fashion we two are of different villages and yet we are about to wed. It is Heaven that has so willed it, He who is just and is never mistaken.

The Young Woman. — No, we are like the reed and the plum tree, which are separated by long distances. Don't make fun of it in that way. But since you tell me of the example of the bees, we have only to follow it. Wait for me then this evening at nightfall and I shall take care not to miss the rendezvous.

2. Prayer:

May we have an abundant harvest of maize! May the 539 wind blow with moderation and the rain fall with regularity! Then 782 more than a hundred plants will give rich harvests. Thus the mandarins will have a tranquil people to rule. Oh, that these desires may be completely realized! Let us beat the drum to celebrate autumn.

The costume of the men scarcely varies from one tribe to an- 291 other (see photo 204, Plate 38, in which representatives of various "Méo" tribes of Upper Tonkin appear). It consists of a jacket which buttons [153] usually in front of the right shoulder as well as on the side, and goes down just below the hips, a long pantaloon falling to the feet and held up by a belt, a turban of variable size, wrapped in a haphazard fashion.

Among those tribes which are in direct contact with the Chinese, [177] the masculine costume approaches that of the Chinese, the jacket buttons in front by means of a variable number of braided loops and buttons and the turban is often replaced by a small skullcap.

The "Méo" usually go about barefooted. Some wear sandals with soles of rattan or bamboo fiber, or even the Chinese heelless

Akha A04
Miao AE5

/139/

b) Music and Musical Instruments

A M 533 The basic music is the same among both peoples; both peoples know singing and the use of musical instruments.

Singing

Singing plays an important role among the Meau as well as among the Akha; both sexes sing on various occasions. I found no confirmation for the assertion by Dhuraratsadorn that the Meau make music only in connection with burials. To be sure, the Akha enjoy singing even more than the Meau, for whom singing while working in the rice fields is prohibited by a taboo (see the chapter, "Religion and Magic," section on "Cult and Taboo"), whereas the Akha sing unhindered and by preference at just such work.

M [248] [784]

Among both peoples there are a few traditional songs of old whose texts are unalterable. The dance songs of the Akha girls belong to this group. The great majority of song texts, however, are improvised and depend on the situation and the singer. There are, for instance, many variations of the songs with which the mother sings her child to sleep. Hopes, wishes, and admonitions are woven into these lullabies of the Meau in which are repeated innumerable times and always to the same melody:

M [854]

M [539]

"Sleep well, my child, I shall cover you to keep you warm and go into the rice field to get fodder for our animals."

"Sleep, my girl, and do not cry, otherwise the dogs and the pigs will bite you."

"Sleep well, my boy, and do not play with knives and do not lose your covering."

"Sleep, my child, I shall go into the rice field and cut sugar cane for you and bring you good food."

A M 533 832 Singing is very important for lovers; it gives them a chance to express the intensity of their emotions, knowledge, mental ability, ready wit, and humor. It is significant that

/139 cont./

A among both peoples good singers always find special approval
M among the girls. It should also be pointed out that /140/ a
533 pronounced love for one's native village runs through many of
832 the love songs, which would not be expected among either the
[621] Meau or Akha, since both, as seminomadic peoples, often
[186] change their habitation sites. One might assume, therefore, that no special attachment to their villages would develop, but since the opposite is the case, it seems to indicate that the nomadic inclination of these peoples is only a secondary development (see the chapter, "Cultural Change and Colonial-Ethnological Problems among the Mountain Peoples in Thailand," section on "Causes of the Migrations").

M The most impressive are the love songs of the Meau,
533 which sometimes betray a really lyrical feeling:
832 "I came to your village in order to love you, but you would not even speak to me; this has made my heart sick with pain."

"I am a strong young man. Oh, why will you not hold my hand?" (Here the singer complains that the girl came to the rendezvous, but now is unwilling to surrender.)

"I visited you in your house, but you did not love me, so I am leaving."

"Now I have come to you, and if you will only stroke my neck, I shall be happy for several years, even if you do not grant me anything else."

"Speak only two words, and I shall be happy for a long time" (the "two words" mean a confirmation of love in return).

"I came to your house; why did you not offer me a cold drink?" (Girls present a "cold drink," that is, water, to the
M friend toward whom they are favorably inclined. Liquor is
[273] regarded as a very obvious invitation.)

"I came to your house, in front of which there is a tree with three fruits. Eat only one fruit, the others are poisonous!" (The singer has heard that his sweetheart has two other friends and warns her.)

/140 cont./

539 The lover also often assures the girl of his faithfulness
832 with a song: "If someone offers me two oranges, I shall eat only one!"

"If two cups of clear water are offered to me, I shall drink only one!" (This indicates that he will not accept a "cold drink" from another girl.)

[836] /141/ Keepsakes are also cherished by the lovers, as is shown by the following definitely lyrical songs:

"If you give me a kerchief, I shall take care of it as I would of you. Whenever I see it, I shall think of you." -- The girl, to whom the boy has given a neck-ring, replies: "When I look at your neck-ring, your embraces will be present to me and I shall think of you."

The following song has particularly fervent words:

"I shall press your kerchief to my breast. If I remain alive, I shall return, and if I should die, my soul will hover around you as a good spirit."

Marabail (1), too, published love songs of the Meau:

1. Pages 296 and 298.

"The young man: 'Man is born only once. Just as the bee and the butterfly seek out the distant flower, so are human beings forced to cover long distances to find those with whom they are to unite. We two are from different villages, yet we want to marry. It is heaven that wishes this, heaven that is just and never errs.' The girl replies: 'Like the reed and the plum tree we are separated by endless distances. One should not jest so. Since you give me the example of the bees, however, we need only imitate them. Expect me then in the evening at nightfall, and I shall not fail to come.'"

539 Savina (2), too, is one of the authors who mention and

2. II, p. 197.

[533] record such alternate songs: "Most of the songs consist of questions and answers." He then gives the song of a mother who mourns for her deceased children: "The little children to

/141 cont./

539 whom the mothers sing in the evening awaken in the morning with the first light. Why then do mine, who have already slept so long, never awaken anymore?

"Every spring when the peach trees bloom by the houses, the little swallows return and again fill their old nests on the smoky roofs with eggs. Why do my children never return anymore to look at their poor little beds?

"Every year when the maize is in bloom in the fields, the cuckoos return to see once more the lonely trees on the mountains and the rocks on the banks /142/ of the turbulent river. Why then do my poor children never return to see their old mother?

When the fruits fall from the tree, they sprout and come up beside it. Why do my children, who sank down at my side, never rise again?

"The grains of rice send out shoots in the water of the rice fields, as do the kernels of maize in the fields surrounded by rocks. Then why do the children of poor mothers never grow up again out of their cold graves?"

114 533 The texts of these songs show that Abadie's statement (1),

1. Page 169.

"The songs in the language of the Meau are always humorous and even erotic," corresponds as little to the facts as the report by Lajonquière (2): "Their songs are always erotic and almost

2. II, p. 312.

never depart from the following theme: the singer addresses a woman who is passing by, asks her what the news is, invites her to sit down beside him, becomes obtrusive. When she continues on her way, he scolds or mocks her."

539 832 To be sure, there are songs which have such a content: "I have come to you in your house, and now you do not want to grant me your favors. Now I shall go to another house and there buy water for my money. The water there is colder than your's. When I drink it, I am happy, for then another girl loves me."

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/142 cont./

M 539 832 A lover to whom favors were granted often sings of his luck in many successive sentences: "Now I have to leave your village, and whenever I remember your embraces, my soul will be happy. Now I must leave, but I shall think only of returning. My soul wanders in the clouds (meaning: you have bewitched me) and not on earth. And when I return and hold your hand, I shall not be able to stop the flow of words until the end of my life (meaning: he will take her as his wife for life). What are you going to give me then to fill my soul and to stop the flow of my words? (a clear allusion to the sexual act, the only moment when the lovers are silent). Whatever you give me I shall give back to you all my life long."

M 533 In these songs rhythm plays no role, and melody only a minor one. The words are produced in a high-pitched voice with wholly /143/ unrelated high notes. Even while traveling M [484] no rhythm is maintained and marching in our sense is unknown to these peoples. There is singing, however, on every occasion: upon setting out to hunt, in connection with the preparations for the caravan when it is necessary to look for new village sites, in connection with bringing in the harvest, and in connection with housework. Lajonquière (1) reports similarly on the Meau.

1. II, p. 311.

There are no professional singers or bards, and similarly no epics heroic songs, or war songs, which formerly, at least among the Meau, were probably present. In any case, however, they cannot be found today. On the other hand, I was able to A [533] find two melodies among the Meau and one among the Akha to which texts similar to our Alpine "ditties" are sung. Often, however, the performer only sings words which happen to come into his head.

M [171] The sound of the songs of the Meau is very reminiscent of the "joiken" of the Lapps (2), although in the case of the

2. Bernatzik, VI, pp. 78 ff.

A M 533 832 joiken there are no words. Alternate songs to which texts are

/221 cont./

182 538 773 Especially among a people as mentally alert and of such high standing as the Meau, one can probably see in this fact an indication that we have here an economically-conditioned cultural loss. Poetry, like every free artistic activity, requires not only mental ability, but also security in the basic conditions of life. That the mental ability in any case is present among the Meau is attested to, in addition to the communications from Savina, by both the mental development of the children and, above all, the spiritual culture which both the Meau and the Akha have developed. People who need all their strength in order merely, with the hardest work, to avoid starvation, however, cannot possibly have the energy required for poetic invention. Traditional lore maintains itself longer, but it, too, disappears if there is not sufficient time and leisure to cultivate it.

773 [184] Nevertheless, among the Meau in Thailand I was able to record a number of legends which often are identical to a great extent with the corresponding myths and tales that other authors have recorded among the Meau in Tonkin. Accordingly, I am presenting the recorded material in the grouping most useful for comparative purposes. Concerning /222/ the origin of the human race, the following was reported to me:

In the beginning the earth was flooded by the ocean. When the water had gradually created its own pathways and earth became visible, a pair of siblings was living there. The brother impregnated the sister, and she gave birth to a gourd, which instead of seeds contained germ cells from which, in the course of time, human beings developed.

539 Lajonquière (1) and Abadie (2) also describe this episode,

1. II, p. 314.

2. Page 168

but these authors state that the Meau have knowledge of the Deluge and the siblings were the only survivors of this natural catastrophe. Savina (3) also described the creation of human beings:

3. II, p. 244.

/222 cont./

539 "As soon as the earth became dry, the Lord took a piece of it and shaped the body of the first man. He blew breath into him and gave him a soul in his belly and a voice. The man was created first, and then the woman. In the daytime the Lord spoke to them. Nowadays he speaks to them only at night, and then through a young girl that appears to them in dreams."

The same author (4) also presents a Flood legend in which

4. II, p. 245.

the creation story of the other authors can easily be recognized:

"One day, water covered the whole earth and rose to heaven. Two pairs of human beings tried to save themselves and climbed to heaven in drums. One pair hid in an iron drum, which toppled over. The other pair sat down in a very light wooden drum and reached heaven. In this drum there were all kinds of grain kernels. These two human beings were brother and sister. The Lord asked them why they had come to heaven. They said because the earth was flooded. The Lord then sent a dragon to earth in the shape of a rainbow, in order to dry it out. The water fell, and the drum likewise; after fifty days it again stood on earth. A mighty eagle took the human beings on its wings in order to take them to a dry spot. Because the eagle found no food, the brother and sister fed it with their own flesh. For this purpose they each took /223/ a piece from the back of the head, one from under the arms, and one from behind the knees. This is why there are still hollows at these places today.

"Brother and sister immediately began to cultivate the soil and to sow grain. The brother was still small, but the sister was already big. When the brother had become bigger, he wanted to marry his sister. The latter refused, because heaven had forbidden marriage between brother and sister. The brother observed that she was the only woman on earth. They then decided to try to discover the wishes of the Lord of Heaven. First they rolled a millstone from a mountain into the plains: the two pieces of the stone did not separate. Next they threw two needles into the air; they did not separate, but fell down to earth together. The same

/223 cont./

539 happened with two coins. Thus the will of heaven had become apparent, and brother and sister cohabited. Their child, however, had neither a head nor hands and feet; it was round like an egg. Perhaps the child is sitting in the egg, they thought, but that was not the case. The pieces which were cut from the egg, however, turned into children. For this reason the egg was divided into as many pieces as possible. The result was an endless number of children, and the earth became repopulated."

114 539 797 Savina reports a number of myths which show an astonishing similarity with Old Testament accounts. He stresses the precise and unaltered transmission of tradition by the Meau. Among the Meau in Thailand I likewise found several myths which, on the whole, seem similar in content to the narratives given by Savina, but they show considerable deviations at decisive points. There are two explanations for these differences. Either the author, under the influence of his own world-view, has involuntarily influenced the statements of the Meau, or the ancestors of the Meau studied by him were at one time under the influence of Christian missionaries. This would not be impossible since it is known that Christian missionaries have been active for centuries in the old territories occupied by the Meau in South China, though the Meau there deserted these territories as a result of the various struggles previously discussed in the chapter, "History." Thus, it is conceivable that the Christian elements adopted, which /224/ show a remote resemblance to the peculiar conceptions of the Meau, were woven in, and Savina then regarded this mixture as characteristic manifestations of the Meau. Under these circumstances the ethnological conclusions that Savina ties in with this fund of myths which he discovered are to be accepted with caution.

539 Savina (1) relates in detail the Meau legend concerning

1. II, p. 243.

the creation of the earth:

"The Lord of Heaven, Ndo Chu or Chu Lau, created heaven and earth in seven days, first heaven, and then earth. The earth

/224 cont./

539 was beautiful and yielded fruits without labor. It was covered with flowers as large as baskets. The Lord created ten suns and nine moons and many stars. The people regarded the stars as luminous stones and feared that they would fall down and kill them. They therefore asked the Lord of Heaven to remove them. This he did not do; instead he spread a tremendous blue veil over the earth in order to protect the people against the falling of the stars. The suns were female, and the moons male. The Lord gave them a soul and blew breath into them. For seven years they dried out the earth, and during this period it was always day; there was no night. Then the Lord created the plants, the animals, and, finally, human beings. At the same time, he created forests in the moon. The trees grew in large flooded plains. The people took the tops of the fallen trees and made arrows out of them, with which they shot at the suns and the moons. Nine suns and eight moons were extinguished. One sun and one moon fled and concealed themselves; during this period eternal night prevailed. For seven years the people lived in darkness; then they asked the sun and the moon to return. They would not, however. The tiger, too, begged in vain. After seven years they appeared again, after the seventh [825] crowing of the cock. Since that time cocks wear a comb as a reward."

The Meau in Thailand similarly told me that formerly there were many suns and moons on the firmament, that the stars arose from the union of the male moons and the female suns, and, furthermore, that the suns and the moons had died in the course of time. /225/ The other statements given by Savina are unknown to the Meau in Thailand.

Then I was told about an earlier age of happiness. The description coincides almost literally with that given by Savina (1):

1. II, p. 180.

/225 cont./

539 There are songs... "about a Golden Age during which weeds did not yet grow in the fields, maize leaves were edible, and the ripe grain flew through the air into the house... Unfortunately, one day a wife did not obey her husband and refused to sweep out her house in order to receive the grain. Since then, grass grows with the maize, maize leaves are edible only for buffalo, and the kernels have to be laboriously carried home in carrying baskets. [482] The Meau say that the invention of the carrying basket stems from that ancient time."

The same author (2) gives still another version of this

2. II, p. 247.

legendary age of happiness, one which I did not find confirmed anywhere in Thailand:

"The Lord made human beings immortal. In the beginning man ate nothing but vegetables. He did not work, the earth produced everything without work. Human beings traveled between heaven and earth. One day, however, a woman ate a white strawberry, which she was not supposed to touch, and drank from a forbidden spring. Since then human beings must work and die. For a long time, however, human beings still became very old, eight hundred or nine hundred years, but misfortune and failures gradually shortened their lives. After the woman's crime, human beings had to leave their dwelling places and were never allowed to return."

Concerning the original home of the Meau the shaman of Kun Fa reported to me: The first land that the Meau inhabited was many years' journeys to the north of their present territory. Half the time was day, half was night. During the night all the water became rigid and formed large smooth boulders and fine white sand. Human beings, animals, and plants were much smaller than in the present land of the Meau. People did not have to suffer from heat as the Meau in the valleys do today, but rather from cold, and they had to cover their bodies with the skins of animals.

/226/
539 Savina (1) gives a similar account: "The first dwelling

1. II, p. 245.

place of the Meau was at the other end of the earth. It was a country with long winters and long nights -- nights of six months. The human beings and the trees were small. The water was frozen, and the earth was covered with snow. Everybody wore furs."

The same author (1) also gives an interesting legend

1. II, p. 245.

which I could not find confirmed among the Meau in Thailand: "The first king of the Meau was a child who remained in the womb for three years. It then lived in a palace of pure gold. One day dissension arose between the Meau and their neighbors about land. The king ordered both parties to depart at nightfall and return before sunrise. Each would be owner of the land that they had traveled over during the night. The party that did not return on time would have to remain at the place where the rising sun caught it. At daybreak the Meau found themselves on a high mountain. Since then the Meau live on mountains."

In the same place Savina gives an account of the origin of languages, which I could not find confirmed in any form:

"When human beings became too numerous on earth, they tried to reach heaven by means of a ladder. The Lord of Heaven, however destroyed with lightning all those who had climbed up. Formerly, all human beings spoke the same language, but since that day every family has spoken a different language. Human beings did not understand one another any more and separated."

/226 cont./

272 One of my informants told me a legend that explains the
539 origin of the prohibition against drinking milk. At the same
574 time it shows how highly important hospitality is regarded among the Meau, since its neglect is punished so severely:

"In olden times there lived a Meau who had seven wives. The chief wife was a Meau, the first secondary wife, a Haw, that is to say, a Chinese, and the other secondary wives were all Meau. Each of these wives gave birth to a son. One day, an old man came and asked for milk. He first asked the chief wife, and then the other Meau wives, but they all refused him. Finally, he turned to the Haw wife, and she took pity on him and gave him milk. When he left, the /227/ old man said: 'Oh, you Haw woman, you have a good heart. Therefore you Haw people may eat and drink whatever you like. In the future, however, the Meau shall be forbidden to drink milk.'"

539 Concerning the origin of the shamans, I was able to learn
756 various details, which Savina (1), however, has taken down in

1. II, p. 209.

greater detail and more fully among the Meau in Tonkin:

"There once lived two men, Ngionggi and Xigi. One day when they were on the seashore they saw an island in the middle of the waves. On this island a crane was sitting on a nest with eggs. The two men took these eggs, pierced and emptied them, and put them back in the nest. When the crane saw that they had been pierced, it filled them with a special substance and hatched them out after forty days. When Ngionggi and Xigi saw this, they took some of the substance, because they thought that they could arouse the dead with it. They tried it first on the corpses of an earthworm and an ant, which immediately came back to life. They then went into a village whose chief had just died, and they brought him back to life. Loaded with presents, they traveled on and everywhere they raised up the dead. One day they decided to return to their families. Their wives and children, however, had died a long time ago, and they were unable

/227 cont./

539 756 to revive their dry bones. Mad with grief, they threw their medicine into a cave and decided to die. Their countrymen tried in vain to prevent them from doing so. They did not succeed, but Ngionggi and Xigi consoled them by saying: 'After our death shall appear to some of you in your dreams in the shape of a virgin and teach you how to cure the sick. Consult these men when you are ill, and you will recover!' Since that time the Meau consult their shamans whenever they are sick."

539 114 I could not find any legends that tell of the historical development of the Meau, nor have other authors, so far as I know, published such legendary material. Only Von Eickstedt (2)

2. II, p. 52.

recorded a legend of the Meau, and a similar version is also reported by Leuschner (3). Von Eickstedt asserts that it is a Man

171 539

3. Page 44.

legend, which, however, is also claimed by the Meau:

/228/ "The Chinese emperor Ti Ku (about 500 B. C.) is said to have promised the hand of his third daughter and the advantages accruing from this to the one who would rid him of his most dangerous enemy, who would kill the latter and bring his head. A yellow dog by the name of Pan Hu heard this, accomplished the deed, and married the princess, who bore him six sons and six daughters. From these stem the various Man tribes. A division of the realm took place, according to which the Chinese were given the valleys and the Man the mountains."

Von Eickstedt correctly concludes that when the Chinese, during an attack by presumably northern warlike nomads, turned to the neighboring mountain peoples for help and the latter actually defeated the enemy, the chief of the mountain peoples was given a daughter of the imperial house along with the political advantages connected with it.

Miao AE5
Akha A04

/228 cont./

M 171 539 Now it follows, however, that this legend belongs to the culture of the Yau (Man) and not to that of the Meau, though it is, of course, quite possible that the Meau, who in Indochina and Thailand often live in the immediate neighborhood of other tribes, have borrowed cultural elements from their neighbors. It is noteworthy for the general ethnology of Farther India that similar motifs may be found among other hoe-culture peoples, as well as in the legends of the gathering people, the Moken* /Mawken/, the inhabitants of the Mergui Archipelago, on which I have published in another place (1).

1. IV, p. 45.

A 773 The Akha, like the Meau, have no concrete conception of the creation of the world and the natural phenomena. Myths concerning this are lacking.

A [82] [789] I was able to find only a single exception, a moon myth. It indicates that an eclipse of the moon causes great alarm since it is believed that a dog is about to devour the moon. To prevent this, crossbows and firearms are fired at the sky.

[114] I could not find any more detailed information in the literature either. Scott (2) mentions in passing that, during the

2. Burma and beyond, p. 270.

festivals of the Akha, "clan legends" were recited so that they will not forget them. Unfortunately, however, he does not give a single legend.